



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>









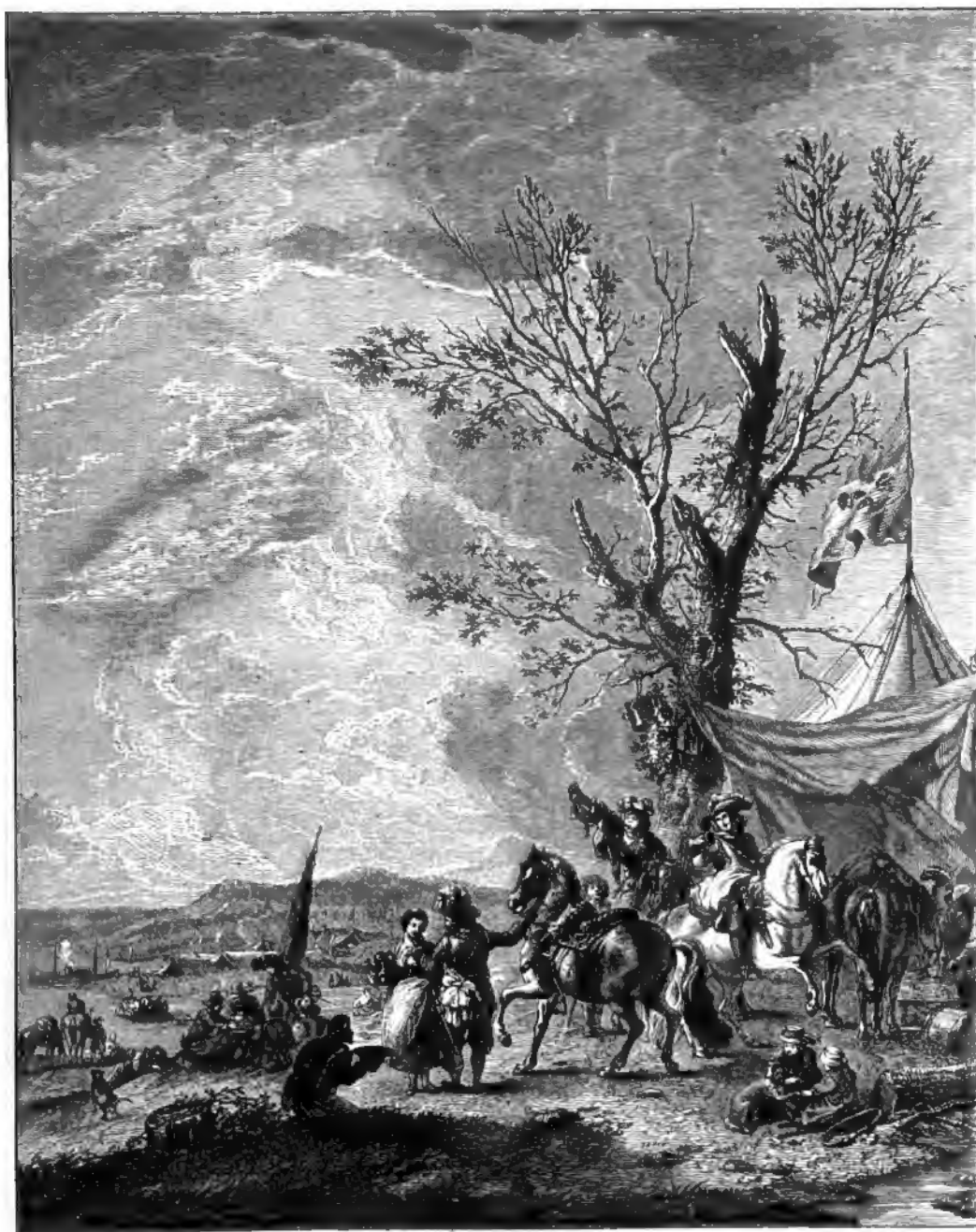












HALT OF CAVALIERS. FROM A PAINTING BY WOUVERMANS.

JOHN CASSELL'S

# ART TREASURES EXHIBITION:

CONTAINING

ENGRAVINGS OF THE PRINCIPAL MASTERPIECES

OF

The English, Dutch, Flemish, French, and German Schools,

WITH

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE PAINTERS,

AND CRITICAL NOTICES OF THEIR PRODUCTIONS.



LONDON:

W. KENT AND CO., 51 & 52, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1858.

1442 ——— 36.

4.



LONDON:  
PETTER AND GALPIN, PRINTERS,  
LA BELLE SAUVAGE YARD, E.C.



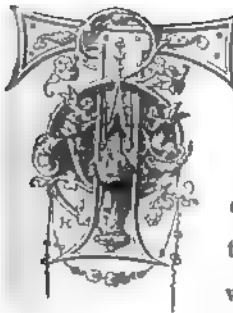
# INDEX TO ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE		PAGE		PAGE
<b>FRONTISPIECE:—Halt of Cavalry,</b> by Wouvermans.		<b>GUYP, ALBERT:—</b>		<b>HOGARTH, WILLIAM:—</b>	
<b>VIEW OF THE INTERIOR OF THE</b> <b>ART TREASURES EXHIBITION,</b> <b>MANCHESTER ... ..</b>	<b>1</b>	Cattle Watering... ..	280	Cruelty to Animals ... ..	124
<b>ASHLEY, JOHN:—</b>		The Encampment ... ..	281	Garrick as Richard III. ... ..	125
Portrait ... ..	344	Starting for a Ride ... ..	284	Finis! ... ..	128
Vignette ... ..	341	Meadows on the Banks of the		<b>JORDAENS, JACOB:—</b>	
The Trooper ... ..	341	Meuse ... ..	285	Portrait ... ..	297
Horses Watering ... ..	343	View of Dordrecht ... ..	288	Family Concert ... ..	292
The Ford ... ..	349	View of the Meuse ... ..	289	Martyrdom of St. Apollina ... ..	293
<b>BEGA, CORNELIUS:—</b>		<b>DAVID, J. LOUIS:—</b>		Le Roi Boit ... ..	296
Alchouse Hop ... ..	313	Belisarius ... ..	463	Satyr and Cottagers ... ..	297
Young Gallant ... ..	316	Oath of the Horatii ... ..	468	<b>JOUVENET, JOHN:—</b>	
Old Invalid ... ..	317	The Sabine Wives ... ..	469	Portrait ... ..	401
<b>BRECKEN, NICHOLAS:—</b>		Death of Socrates ... ..	472	Descent from the Cross ... ..	397
Portrait ... ..	360	Portrait of Pius VII. ... ..	478	Extreme Unction ... ..	400
Shepherd and Goat ... ..	360	Napoleon crossing the Alps ... ..	479	Vignette ... ..	401
Travellers Conversing ... ..	361	<b>DESPORTES, A. FRANCIS:—</b>		Miraculous Draught of Fishes ... ..	404
Rural Employment ... ..	361	Portrait ... ..	449	<b>LANCE, GEORGE:—</b>	
Port of Genoa ... ..	366	Vignette ... ..	449	Fruit ... ..	129
<b>BOURDON, SEBASTIAN:—</b>		Wolf-hunt ... ..	452	The Redcap ... ..	132
Portrait ... ..	432	Hounds ... ..	453	<b>LANDSEER, SIR EDWIN:—</b>	
Halt of the Holy Family ... ..	420	Pointers ... ..	453	The Two Dogs ... ..	38
Healing the Sick ... ..	421	<b>DIETRICH, CHRISTIAN:—</b>		Dignity and Impudence ... ..	29
The Artist's Studio ... ..	424	Portrait ... ..	507	Laying down the Law ... ..	32
Security ... ..	425	Itinerant Musicians ... ..	500	Gentle Shepherd ... ..	38
Virgin and Child ... ..	428	The Flight into Egypt ... ..	501	High Life ... ..	36
Flight into Egypt ... ..	429	The Grinder and Cobbler ... ..	504	Low Life ... ..	37
Vignette ... ..	432	The Repose of the Holy Family ... ..	505	Stag in the Torrent ... ..	40
<b>BRAUWER, ADRIAN:—</b>		The Wooden Bridge ... ..	508	Widowed Duck ... ..	41
Portrait ... ..	272	<b>DURER, ALBERT:—</b>		<b>LANTARA:—</b>	
Wearry Traveller ... ..	272	Portrait ... ..	496	Portrait ... ..	461
The Fiddler ... ..	278	The Betrothal of the Virgin ... ..	484	Returning from Market ... ..	477
Tipplers ... ..	276	The Lord and his Lady ... ..	485	Banks of the Seine ... ..	480
Tavern Brawl ... ..	277	The Virgin and Child ... ..	488	<b>LAWRENCE, SIR THOMAS:—</b>	
<b>BRUGHEL DE VELOURS:—</b>		The Great Horse ... ..	489	Portrait ... ..	168
Portrait ... ..	352	Melancholy ... ..	492	Countess Gower and Child ... ..	169
Watermill ... ..	352	Armorial Shield of the Death's		Children of C. B. Calmady, Esq. ... ..	172
Wayside Shrine ... ..	353	Head ... ..	499	George IV. ... ..	173
The Wagon ... ..	356	<b>ELMORE, ALFRED:—</b>		Master Lambton ... ..	176
View near Bruges ... ..	357	Origin of the Stocking-loom ... ..	188	Duchess of Sutherland ... ..	177
<b>BURNET, JAMES:—</b>		The Novice ... ..	186	Daughter ... ..	177
The Orphan Bird ... ..	141	<b>FERG, FRANCIS DE PAULA:—</b>		John Kemble as Hamlet ... ..	180
<b>CLAUDE LORRAINE:—</b>		The Village Fair ... ..	509	<b>LESLIE, C. R.:—</b>	
Portrait ... ..	393	<b>GAINSBOROUGH, THOMAS:—</b>		Sancho Panza ... ..	137
Tobit and the Angel ... ..	381	Portrait ... ..	65	The Rivals ... ..	140
Cattle Watering ... ..	384	Blus Boy ... ..	68	<b>MILLAR, J. E.:—</b>	
The Herdsman ... ..	385	Boys and Fighting Dogs ... ..	69	The Proscribed Royalist ... ..	44
Landing of Cleopatra ... ..	388	Landscape, with Children ... ..	72	Order of Release ... ..	45
Dance by the Water-side ... ..	389	Cottage Door ... ..	76	Autumn Leaves ... ..	48
Watering-place for Cattle ... ..	390	The Brook ... ..	76	<b>OSTADE, ADRIAN VAN:—</b>	
Vignette ... ..	393	Donkey Race ... ..	77	Portrait ... ..	241
The Ancient Forum ... ..	394	<b>HOGARTH, WILLIAM:—</b>		Boots Smoking ... ..	241
<b>COMSTABLE, JOHN:—</b>		Portrait ... ..	123	Painter's Study ... ..	244
Portrait ... ..	80	Enraged Musician ... ..	100	Rustic Interior ... ..	245
The Loch ... ..	81	The Canvase ... ..	109	Rustic Dance ... ..	248
Cornfield ... ..	84	Marriage à la Mode, No. 1 ... ..	112	Dutch Cabaret ... ..	249
Farm of the Valley ... ..	85	Ditto No. 2 ... ..	113	Humpbacked Fiddler ... ..	252
Osmington, near Weymouth ... ..	88	The Bowl of Punch ... ..	116	Itinerant Musicians ... ..	255
		The Cock Pit ... ..	117	Game of Galet ... ..	256
		Sigmunda ... ..	120	<b>OUDEY, J. BAPTISTE:—</b>	
		The Alchemist ... ..	131	Portrait ... ..	483
				Dog and Whelps ... ..	483

<b>ODRY, J. BAPTISTE:—</b>	<b>PAGE</b>	<b>STEEN, JAN:—</b>	<b>PAGE</b>	<b>WILKIE, SIR DAVID:—</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
Reebuck at Bay...	436	Portrait ...	828	The Village Festival ...	...
Wolf in a Fix ...	437	Dancing Dogs ...	820	Blind Man's Buff ...	...
Startled Fox ...	440	Parrot ...	821	Jew's Harp ...	...
Stag Hunt ...	441	Grace before Meat ...	824	The Pedlar ...	...
Elephant and Rat ...	444	Game of Ninepins ...	825	Letter of Introduction ...	1
The Heron ...	445	Group ...	828	Duncan Gray ...	1
Monkey and Cat ...	448	<b>STELLA, JAMES:—</b>		Village Politicians ...	1
<b>POTTER, PAUL:—</b>		Portrait ...	457	Rent Day ...	1
Portrait ...	257	Virgin and Child ...	458	Rabbit on the Wall ...	2
Cows ...	259	Village Dance ...	460	The Cut Finger ...	2
Cow and her Shadow ...	260	St. Peter denies Christ ...	461	Sir W. Scott and Family ...	2
Pasture Ground ...	261	Coming Home from Work ...	464	Blind Fiddler ...	2
Horses at Bait ...	264	<b>STONE, FRANK:—</b>		<b>WILSON, RICHARD:—</b>	
The Meadow ...	265	Reconciliation; or, a Sister's		Portrait ...	10
The Bull ...	268	Advice... ..	181	Morning ...	10
Landscape with Cows ...	269	<b>TENIERS, DAVID:—</b>		Evening ...	10
<b>REMBRANDT, PAUL:—</b>		Portrait ...	368	<b>ART TREASURES EXHIBITION AT</b>	
Portrait ...	240	Knife Grinder ...	368	<b>MANCHESTER: ITS HISTORY</b>	
Ephraim Bonds ...	220	Flemish Kermesse ...	369	<b>DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING ...</b>	
Descent from the Cross ...	221	Temptation of St. Anthony ...	372	<b>MEMOIRS AND DESCRIPTION OF</b>	
Jesus Clearing the Temple ...	224	The Jealous Wife ...	373	<b>WORKS:—</b>	
Night Watch ...	225	The Spendthrift ...	376	Asselyn, John ...	3
Resurrection of Lazarus ...	228	Bacchanalian Philosophers ...	377	Bega, Cornelius ...	3
Portrait of an Old Man ...	229	Diabolical Reading ...	380	Berghem, Nicholas ...	3
Prodigal's Return ...	232	<b>TURNER, J. M. W.:—</b>		Bourdon, Sebastian ...	4
The Three Trees ...	233	Portrait ...	89	Brauer, Adrian ...	2
Dr. Faustus ...	236	Cascade of Terni ...	92	Breughel, John ...	3
Burgomaster Six ...	237	Argus and Adonis ...	93	Burnet, James ...	1
<b>REYNOLDS, SIR JOSHUA:—</b>		Kirkstall Abbey... ..	96	Claude Lorrain ...	3
Portrait ...	49	Mouth of the Humber ...	97	Constable, John ...	...
The Schoolboy ...	52	Fishing-boat in a Storm ...	100	Cuyp, Albert ...	2
Count Ugolino ...	53	<b>VALENTIN, MOSES:—</b>		David, J. Louis ...	4
Portrait of John Hunter ...	56	Portrait ...	417	Desportes, A. Francis ...	4
The Nativity ...	57	The Concert ...	405	Dietrich, Christian ...	1
Beggar Boy ...	60	The Guardsmen Quarrelling ...	408	Durer, Albert ...	4
Snake in the Grass ...	61	Musical Party ...	409	Elmore, Alfred ...	1
Holy Family ...	64	Justification of Susannah ...	412	Ferg, Francis de Paula... ..	1
<b>RUBENS, P. PAUL:—</b>		Judgment of Solomon ...	413	Gainsborough, Thomas... ..	...
Portrait ...	184	St. Matthew ...	416	Hogarth, William ...	...
Silenus ...	184	The Tribute Money ...	417	Jordaens, Jacob ...	...
Henry IV. and his Queen ...	185	<b>VAN DER NEER:—</b>		Jouvenet, John ...	1
Flight into Egypt ...	188	Head Piece ...	329	Lance, George ...	...
Descent from the Cross... ..	189	Boats by Moonlight ...	329	Landseer, Sir Edwin ...	...
March of Silenus ...	192	Moonlight Scene ...	332	Lantara, Simon Mathurin ...	1
Meeting of Mary and Elizabeth ...	193	The Skaters ...	333	Lawrence, Sir Thomas... ..	...
Venus and the Loves ...	196	Morning ...	336	Leslie, C. R. ...	...
Sons of Rubens ...	197	Evening ...	337	Millais, J. E. ...	...
The Rainbow ...	200	Moonlight and River ...	337	Ostade, Adrian Van ...	...
Château de Steen ...	201	River Scene ...	340	Oudry, J. Baptiste ...	...
Susannah and the Elders ...	204	Rising Moon ...	341	Potter, Paul ...	...
La Conclusion de la Paix ...	205	<b>VANDYCK, ANTHONY:—</b>		Rembrandt, Paul ...	...
The Kermesse ...	206	Portrait ...	145	Reynolds, Sir Joshua ...	...
<b>RUYSDAEL, JACOB:—</b>		Madonna and Child ...	148	Rubens, Peter Paul ...	...
Portrait ...	312	The Crown of Thorns ...	149	Ruysdael, Jacob ...	...
Forest Scene ...	300	Queen Henrietta Maria and		Sneyders, François ...	...
Waterfall... ..	301	Family ...	152	Steen, Jan ...	...
Outskirts of the Forest... ..	304	The Mystic Marriage ...	153	Stella, James ...	...
Rustic Bridge ...	305	Van Der Borcht... ..	156	Stone, Frank ...	...
Cornfield ...	305	Charles I. ...	157	Teniers, David ...	...
The Beach ...	308	Children of Charles I. ...	160	Turner, J. M. W. ...	...
The Lake... ..	309	Dr. Gevartius ...	161	Valentin, Moses... ..	...
Cow in Pond ...	312	Portrait of F. Sneyders ...	164	Vandyck, Anthony ...	...
<b>SNEYDERS, FRANÇOIS:—</b>		Portrait of F. Langlois ...	165	Van der Neer ...	...
Portrait ...	309	<b>WESTALL, RICHARD:—</b>		Westall, Richard ...	...
Dealer in Game... ..	312	Peasant Boy ...	144	Wilkie, Sir David ...	...
Boar Hunt ...	313			Wilson, Richard ...	...
Dogs and Bears ...	316				
Dogs in a Larder ...	317				

## PREFACE.

---



THE conclusion of the Volume of JOHN CASSELL'S ART TREASURES EXHIBITION suggests the propriety of addressing a few words to our subscribers relative to the origin, object, and merits of the work.

The Art Treasures Palace at Manchester, of the year 1857, which now exists only in the memory of those who enjoyed the privilege of inspecting the unrivalled collection of private paintings assembled within its walls, was, from the very nature of the undertaking, of an ephemeral character.

The masterpieces of the great chiefs of the various schools, which, for the purposes of Art Education, had been contributed to the Manchester Exhibition by their noble and patriotic owners, will, in all human probability, never again be united under the same roof. The risk of injury was too great, the expense of conveyance, and the anxiety which even the temporary removal of artistic treasures, which for centuries have been heir-looms in great families, occasioned their possessors, to whom nothing could compensate for their loss, were too serious to be again lightly incurred. Fearing, therefore, that the taste for art which this Exhibition had widely engendered in the public mind might—like a tender child, which requires the care of a fond nursing mother—perish for want of encouragement, JOHN CASSELL determined to keep alive, if possible, not only the memory of the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition, but also that craving for Art Education which it had fostered, by the reproduction in wood, in the highest style of art, of the most famous *chefs-d'œuvre* exhibited at Manchester, and also of the best paintings of the chief masters of the various schools, wherever they are preserved, either in private collections or public galleries.

The ART TREASURES EXHIBITION, which he now publishes in a complete volume, is a book *en genereis*, for there is no other work of art conducted upon the same plan and offering the same information and advantages to the art student, the connoisseur, or the public, in either our own or any other language. It contains not only a collection of Wood-engravings of extraordinary merit from the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the masters of the English, Dutch, Flemish, French, and German



schools, but a Biographical Sketch, compiled from the best authority, of every painter to whom allusion is made in the course of the work, together with a critical and historical notice of every picture reproduced in the engravings.

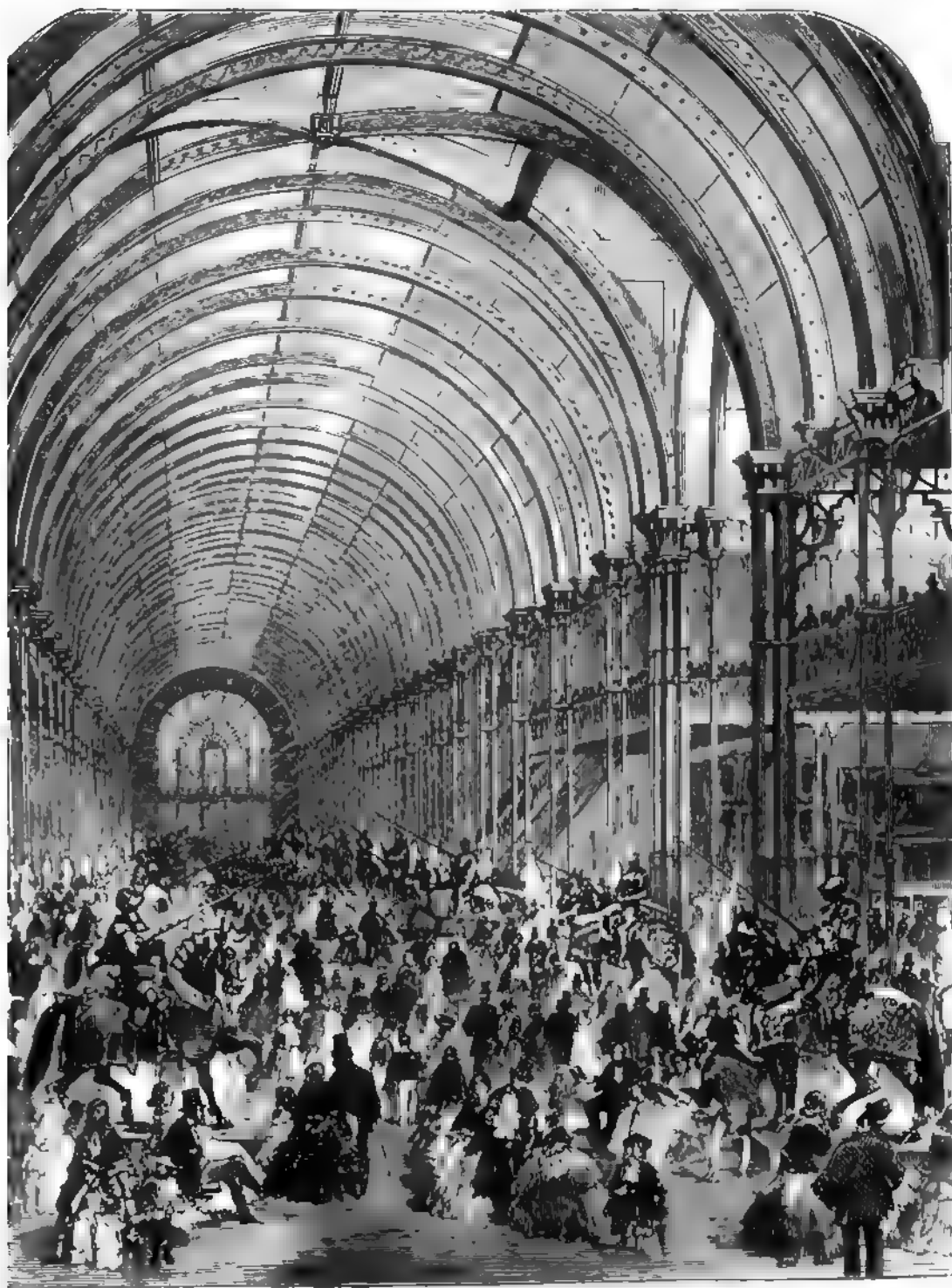
The Memoirs, which are written in a clear and popular style, form a complete and most valuable synopsis of the history of painting, from the time of the "Renaissance," or, in other words, of Michael Angelo and Raphael, in those several schools. The Engravings which accompany them illustrate the truth and discrimination of the author's historical and critical observations. The Biographical Sketches, in most instances, conclude with a summary of the merits and shortcomings of the several masters; and where an opportunity occurs, comparisons are instituted between the style and manner of the great painters, whether they happen to be of the same or different schools.

The work is purposely written in language intelligible to all readers, professional or otherwise. No technicalities are used which require the assistance of a glossary; no descriptions or criticisms are introduced which pre-suppose any knowledge of painting, either practical or theoretical. A careful perusal of the whole work will, however, amply repay the labour of the art student, and he will gain information from these pages which he cannot procure elsewhere; and the unprofessional reader, for whom the work is more especially designed, will, by the study of *J. CASSELL'S ART TREASURES EXHIBITION*, have his mind enlarged, his intellect improved, his stock of general knowledge widely increased, and a taste for art awakened if it was dormant in him, and created if it was non-existent. The volume in its complete form contains upwards of two hundred and sixty engravings, together with forty-five biographical sketches of celebrated masters.



**JOHN CASSELL'S  
ART TREASURES EXHIBITION.**

---



INTERIOR OF THE ART TREASURES EXHIBITION BUILDING AT MANCHESTER.

## THE ART TREASURES EXHIBITION AT MANCHESTER.



THE Art Treasures Exhibition at Manchester, of which we give an elaborate representation on our frontispiece, owes its origin, in the first instance, to an idea which occurred to Mr. C. J. Deane, while he was visiting the Hotel de Clunie. This gentleman, formerly a Commissioner of the Dublin Exhibition, and now connected with the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, first conceived the idea of collecting within the walls of a gallery at Manchester those *chefs-d'œuvre* of art, with which he was aware that England was, more than any other country of the world, abundantly supplied. The ancestral palaces of our nobility contain, as he well knew, the finest and the most numerous productions of the great masters of the three celebrated schools of painting; and he did not "reckon without his host," when he depended for the success of his project upon a patriotic wish in the English aristocracy to promote among the people a love of science, and a knowledge of those great masterpieces of human genius, through the contemplation of which the popular taste might be elevated and refined. He communicated his plans to some of the principal manufacturers of the city, and received so much encouragement from the leading men of Manchester, that, at the close of March, 1856, he issued his celebrated circular. This document produced an immediate and most gratifying effect. The project was of so popular a nature, and the citizens of Manchester were so pleased with the prospect of seeing their own manufacturing town raised for a time into an emporium of the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the fine arts, that within six weeks of the publication of his plan, Mr. Deane had the satisfaction of hearing that his project was adopted, and a scheme devised for raising the funds necessary for carrying it into execution.

The men of Manchester have been frequently taunted with their excessive love of gain; but the readiness with which they listened to the suggestions of Mr. Deane, and the amount of the sums which they have subscribed for the purpose of securing the success of his undertaking, proves that, with a legitimate object in view, they are quite as ready to give as to receive.

There were, however, many, even in Manchester, who still doubted the possibility of raising the guarantee fund; and others—a more numerous and discouraging class—who affirmed that the possessors of the richest works of art would not be so improvident as to send them into the neighbourhood of the tall chimneys of Manchester; a third class—who ought to have known that wealth and intelligence, whether they arise in commercial cities or elsewhere, generally develop themselves in a love of the fine arts—asked, "What does Manchester want with pictures?" However, the first difficulty that had been started proved to be no obstacle at all; for, although no regular canvass was made, thirty-two gentlemen put down their names for £1,000 each, and sixty for £500 each, making a total of £62,000. Some, who were not applied to, subsequently offered to become guarantee subscribers, and the fund now exceeds £70,000. The Mayor made an application, through Colonel Phipps, for an interview with Prince Albert upon the subject. This was accorded, and, on the 7th of May, the Mayor, with Mr. Thomas Fairbairn (chairman of the Executive Committee), and other gentlemen, had an interview with the Prince at Buckingham Palace, and submitted the views of the promoters; stating that a fund of upwards of £60,000 had been promptly subscribed, and that, if the same degree of patronage and support which had been granted by Her Gracious Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness to the Dublin Exhibition were also accorded to the proposed Manchester scheme, there could be no doubt of ultimate success. The Prince expressed his approval of the project; made some valuable suggestions respecting the importance of a judicious classification of the works of the ancient and modern masters, and intimated that the subject should be brought before the Queen. A few days afterwards, Her Majesty signified her willingness to grant her patronage. A meeting of the subscribers was then held (May 20th), when the progress made was duly reported. The particulars respecting the interview with Prince Albert were detailed; and the deputation stated that they had also waited upon the Earl of Ellesmere and the Earl of Derby, and that these noblemen had given the most cordial assurances of co-operation.

Upon the basis of the encouraging assurances received, Mr. Thomas Bazley (President of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, and one of the active commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851, proposed a resolution, affirming that an Exhibition of Art Treasures should be held in Manchester, in 1857. This was unanimously adopted, and several speeches, on the importance of art education, were delivered. The Executive Committee were appointed, and invested with the requisite powers for prosecuting the project.

In due course, sites were offered for the building, and tenders made for its erection. On the 23rd of June, the General Council, composed of guarantee subscribers, assembled at the offices which had been taken, and fitted up, in Mosley-street. The Committee recommended the site at Old Trafford, which is about two miles from the Manchester Royal Exchange, and on the western side of the city, as the most appropriate, the locality being open, and having contiguous to it the spacious gardens of the Manchester Botanical Society. The plans sent in by contractors were numerous, but the designs of Messrs. C. D. Young and Co., of London and Leith, with some modifications effected by Mr. E. Salomons (architect to the Committee) in concert with Mr. Young, were those suggested as most appropriate. The site, about thirty acres, on land belonging to Sir Humphrey de Trafford (a family settled here since the Norman Conquest), and the designs of Messrs. Young and Co. for the sum of £24,500, were unanimously approved by the council. The preparation of the ground was commenced, and, on the 13th of August, the ceremony of raising the first pillar took place; the Executive Committee, the General Council, and a number of ladies, being present to witness the formal origination of a vast temple devoted to the fine arts—an edifice which, if it could not rival the Vatican in its stateliness and solidity, or the Louvre in its gorgeous interior, would, in one respect, be more wonderful than either. The Vatican is the depository of the accumulated treasures of ages; the Louvre displays the trophies of warfare, and the purchases of an Imperial exchequer; but this would furnish proof to the world of the unselfishness of Englishmen, when appealed to for the proud purpose of developing a great and ennobling design. After this the work progressed rapidly, under the directions of the contractors, and the supervision of Mr. Dredge, their resident engineer.

The reader must now suppose the gradual arrival upon the ground, from the contiguous railway, of millions of bricks, for the foundations of columns, of sleeper-walls, &c., hundreds of thousands of planks, and large stacks of columns, roof principals, and girders, while we direct attention to the means adopted for procuring the art treasures which were to find a fitting abode within them. The valuable experience of Mr. J. C. Deane pointed him out as the most suitable gentleman for the responsible post of General Commissioner, and he was appointed to this office. On the 4th of September a list of pictures was received from Colonel Phipps, accompanied by the following letter:—"These pictures her Majesty the Queen will have much pleasure in lending for the purposes of the exhibition." These included twenty-two from Buckingham Palace, and seventeen from Windsor Castle. They are the gems of the collection—including works by Titian, Rubens, Rembrandt, Van Ostade, Van de Velde, Wouvermans, Vandyk, Claude Lorraine, Holbein, Guido, Dominichino, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir David Wilkie, &c. In the course of this work, we shall endeavour to administer to the instruction and delight of our readers by presenting them with finely executed wood engravings of the most choice productions of the above and other celebrated masters.

A deputation waited also upon his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (the Earl of Carlisle), in Dublin, and received from him assurances of the most cordial co-operation. Many rich treasures have been received from the Irish societies, as well as from private noblemen and gentlemen. His Excellency has sent the gems of his collection from Castle Howard, including that celebrated picture by Annibale Caracci, the "The Three Marys." In this introductory article we have no space for an enumeration of the contributors, but the following will show that the appeal made by the men of Manchester to the noblemen and gentlemen of the land, met with a response which dissipated at once all the doubts and fears of the sceptical:—The Duke of Newcastle, the Duke of Hamilton, the Duke of Manchester, Earl de Grey, Earl of Ellesmere, Earl of Derby, Lord Overstone (now elected President of the Council, in place of the late highly esteemed Earl of Ellesmere), Lord Eglinton, Lord Palmerston, the Bishops of Manchester and Ripon, Lord Ashburton, Lord Wharnccliffe, Lord Ward, Lord Littleton, Sir Humphrey de Trafford, the Duke of Richmond, the Duke of Marlborough, and a host of gentry, having rare and valuable collections, will all furnish stores from which it will be our happiness to draw. We shall thus be able to produce in our "Art Treasures Exhibition" copies of



works engraved in the first style of art, and neatly printed upon good paper, which may adorn the dwelling of the humblest among us ; and, indeed, to no small extent, place within his reach the means of himself becoming the owner of the art treasures, not of our national collections alone, but of the principal galleries of the world, since we shall furnish him with representations of some of



THE VILLAGE FESTIVAL. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR DAVID WILKIE.

the best specimens of what is contained in the palaces of royalty, the mansions of the nobility, and the collections of all the crowned heads of Europa.

We acknowledge that many of the Engravings have appeared in a more expensive work, but, as our plan develops itself, it will be seen that a more complete and comprehensive Gallery of Art Treasures—

THE ART TREASURES EXHIBITION AT MANCHESTER.

low to  
the  
the  
the  
the

BLIND MAN'S BUFF, FROM A PICTURE BY SIR DAVID WILKIE. EXHIBITED BY HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN.



more especially in the copies of the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the great painters—has never before been offered to the public.

We must now say a little more respecting the noble fabric, whose exterior and interior appear in this number. It was so far completed, on the 18th of February, that an interesting promenade took place within its spacious walls. There were 6,000 ladies and gentlemen present, and amongst them the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Lincoln, the Lord Bishop of Manchester, and many influential citizens. A military band performed a selection of music, and the acoustic qualities of the building were found to be highly satisfactory. Since then it has been appropriately adorned, and now contains its rich treasures; the general arrangements of which we will analyse, whilst giving an outline of the chief compartments of the building itself.

The palace is 700 feet in length, by 200 feet, and covers a space of 15,200 square yards, or a little more than three acres. It looks towards the east, in the direction of the principal road from the city; on the west there are fields, on the south, a space of ground, bounded by a covered railway platform, 800 feet in length. On the north side are the Botanical Gardens, to which there will be a small charge made by the proprietors for admission. The exterior is of corrugated iron sheets, which fit at the sides in grooves of wrought iron standards. There is then an interior lining of wood, covered with canvas, and papered. In the design of the façade, respect was had to the form of the roofs. The portion over the centre of the hall is a lofty semicircle, and the arch which terminates it presents, to a person standing near, an imposing appearance. The side-aisles of the hall have lower ridge-roofs, and the part of the front corresponding to these is horizontal; while the semicircular arches beyond, to the right and left, resemble the contour of the roofs over the picture galleries. In addition to the breadth of 200 feet, occupied by the actual front of the building, the façade extends 150 feet to the left, in connection with the corridor from the railway; and 100 feet to the right, behind which are several offices. A neat effect is produced by intermingling white brick with red, so as to form panels.

## THE INTERIOR.



On passing the main entrance, the visitor has before him an uninterrupted view of the grand hall, consisting of centre and side aisles. It is 700 feet in length, and 104 feet broad, the nave being 56 feet, and each aisle 24 feet. The semicircular roof over the nave rests upon two rows of columns, standing in pairs athwart the building. They have attached to their capitals ornamental brackets (supporting the girders), containing the monogram "A. T. E.," gilded. The principals, bearing upon the columns and girders alternately, span the roof in a vast semicircle. The crown of the arch is glazed for a breadth of 30 feet, and the altitude from the floor is 65 feet. The breadth of the aisles is 24 feet. The hall is crossed by a transept, of the same height and breadth, at 500 feet from the entrance. Its two ends have ornamental windows, of a radial character, similar to those in the lower portion of the front arches. To the west of the transept there is, on the north side, an oriental court; on the south, a gallery for engravings, and, beyond both, one for water-colour drawings. A commodious raised gallery occupies the breadth of the aisles for 72 feet east and west of the transept, around which it is also continued.

The Picture Galleries flank the aisles of the grand hall, with which they communicate at several points, by arched entrances. They are respectively 48 feet broad and 51½ feet high, and glazed along the centre of the roof for a breadth of 24 feet. Each gallery is divided into three compartments (by open arches), having a length of 120 feet. This facilitates the classification of the various schools of art. The series of galleries on the south side are devoted to the ancient masters; the Italian works being attached to the extreme wall of the building; and the German, Flemish, English, &c., to the inner one. The works of the modern masters are arranged in the galleries on the north side of the building, also in chronological order. The portraits (about 500) of English celebrities cover the walls of the great hall; the names of the artists being displayed above them, in blue tablets, formed in an ornamental cornice.

The Museum of Art is arranged in glass cases, placed a little beyond the lines of columns, and forms a magnificent and priceless collection, of the most varied character. The sculpture occupies a corre-

sponding position within the range of columns, trenching a little upon the nave, but leaving ample space for the free passage of a large concourse of people. Near the western end, the collection of armoury is displayed upon figures mounted on a stud of well-carved horses.

A powerful organ is erected at the western extremity, and in front of it an orchestra capable of accommodating 100 performers and 500 vocalists. This suggests the magnificence of the opening ceremonial, an account of which will appear in our next number. Judging from the musical talent engaged, the extent of the preparations, and the quality of the company which may be expected, we have no doubt the inauguration will prove worthy of this great and important national object.

## SIR DAVID WILKIE.



If the object of CASSELL'S ART TREASURES EXHIBITION is to bring within the reach of all classes of society a knowledge of the history and *chef-d'œuvre* of the great masters whose works are now exhibited at Manchester, we shall not restrict our notices to those paintings which the projectors of the Exhibition have, with so much industry and enterprise, collected within the walls of the building.

Valuable and excellent as these undoubtedly are, they give but an inadequate notion of the genius and prolific execution of some of the greatest masters of their art, whose highly-prized productions are scattered so far and wide, that we cannot expect to see assembled within the compass of one gallery more than some few samples of their excellence.

We shall commence our illustrations with an analysis of the *chef-d'œuvre* of Sir David Wilkie, a painter of the modern school, and of home production, than whom no artist of the present century has achieved a greater and, we think, more enduring reputation, or acquired a better merited popularity.

He was born on the 18th of November, 1785, in the village of Cuths, in Fifeshire, and was the third son of David Wilkie, minister of the parish, and Isabella Lister, his third wife. From early childhood the future painter evinced the greatest possible dislike to book-learning; and his father discovered, after many unavailing attempts to inculcate the rudiments of classical knowledge, that his son had no taste for anything but drawing. In those days the barbarous sentiment of the rough and unlettered George II., "*Bainters is no goot, nor Boets neder*," was shared in by many; and the minister saw, in consequence, but little chance of his son earning his bread by painting. But his mother, who had a clearer perception of her son's genius, and a more hopeful and prophetic reliance upon its future appreciation by the world, counteracted the efforts of her husband to crush the youthful Wilkie's talent. Through her persevering endeavours, he was, in the year 1799, sent to Edinburgh, with some specimen drawings, and a letter of introduction from the Earl of Leven to Mr. Thompson, the secretary of the "Trustee Academy for the Encouragement of Manufactures." Although the drawings were not considered indicative of any decided genius, he was admitted, through the interest of his noble patron; and, with the advantages of good instruction and regular discipline, made a progress which seemed almost miraculous.

Although certainly inferior to many in the same class in knowledge of his art, he was superior to all in delineation of character. He worshipped Nature; and to make himself acquainted with her, under all her different phases, he was a constant frequenter of trysts, fairs, and market-places. His industry was indefatigable; and he exposed himself to the ridicule of his fellow-students, by his determination to improve, as far as possible, the opportunity of instruction he enjoyed. He was always the first to enter the Academy, and the last to leave it; and even when the hours of study were over, he only retired to his lodgings, to labour more assiduously than ever, as long as daylight lasted, at what he had commenced in the morning. He knew that, although the gift of painting, like that of

poetry, must be born with a man, it can never be made available without intense labour and application.

In 1803 he achieved his first important success, and won the prize of ten guineas for the best painting of "Callisto in the Bath of Diana." It was about this time that he made his sketch of "The Village Politicians."

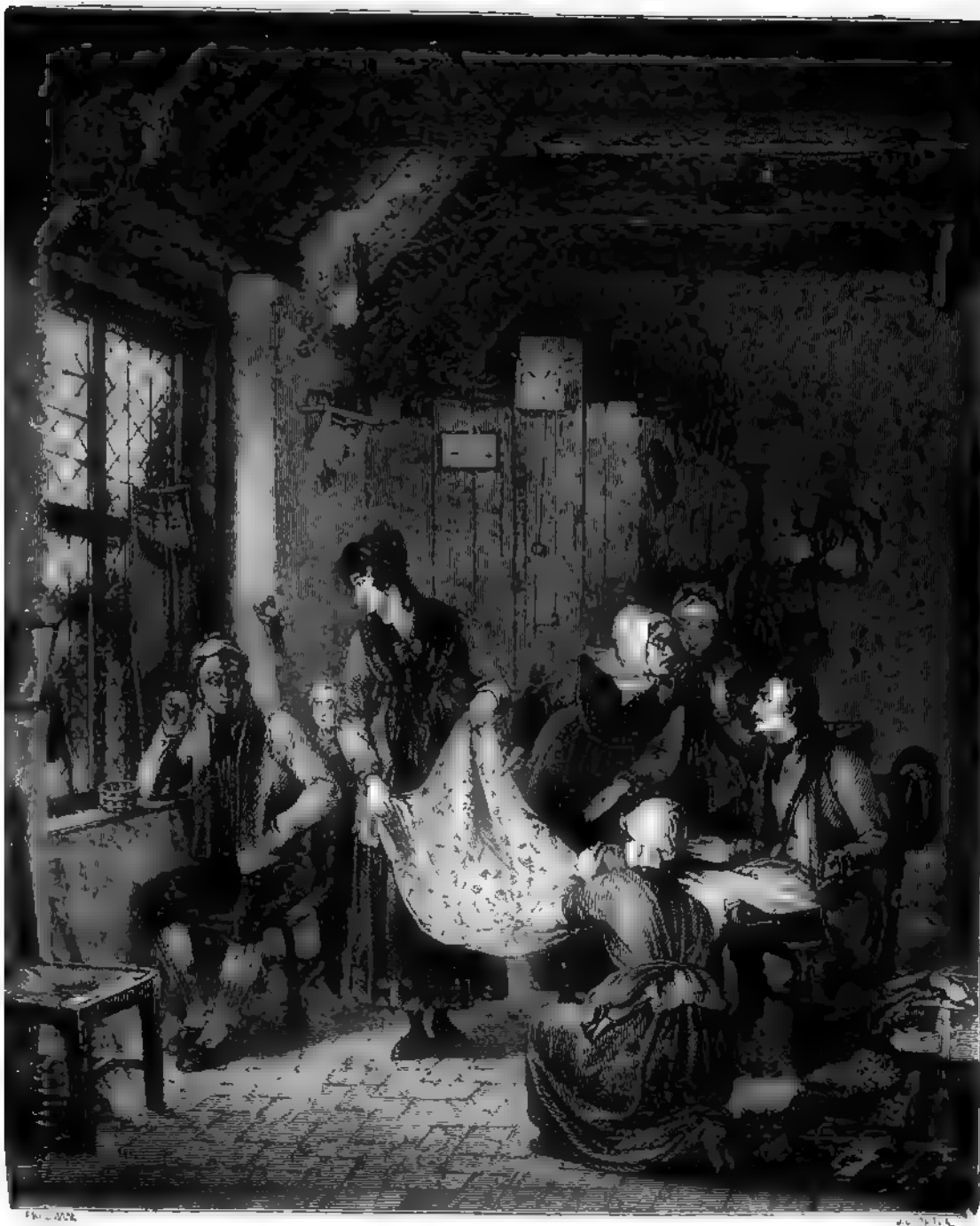
In 1804 he left the Academy, and returned home, where he painted a *tableau de genre*, entitled, "Pitlessie Fair," in which he inserted the portraits of one hundred and forty rustics of the neighbour-



THE JEW'S HARP. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR DAVID WILKIE.

hood. He shortly afterwards set out for London, carrying with him a picture called "The Village Recruit," which he sold, at Charing-cross, for six pounds.

His progress in the great metropolis, where he immediately obtained admission as a student of the Royal Academy, was very rapid; and the picture which, at the suggestion of his patron, the Earl of Mansfield, he executed from his early sketch of "The Village Politicians," brought him both fame and money. Commissions for pictures came pouring in upon him so fast, that he was compelled to abandon the project he had entertained of returning to Scotland. "The Blind Fiddler," which he painted for Sir George Beaumont; "The Card Players," painted for the Duke of Gloucester; "The Rent Day," for the Earl of Mulgrave; "The Sick Lady," "The Jew's Harp," &c., &c., established his reputation;



THE PEDLAR. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR DAVID WILKIE.

and "The Village Festival," which was painted for Mr. Angerstein, brought him the large sum of eight hundred guineas.

"BLINDMAN'S BUFF."

In 1813 he painted for the Prince Regent his celebrated picture of "Blindman's Buff," which is now exhibiting at Manchester, and of which we give the accompanying beautiful engraving. The

opinions of the connoisseurs about this admirable representation of domestic life were by no means unanimous. Success had excited envy, and less fortunate artists criticised severely the execution of masterpiece which had established the reputation of the Scotch painter. "You have made a perilous step into the vulgar, my dear friend," said Fuseli: "either your fortune is assured or you are ruined." Some declared that Wilkie had created a new school—the school of beggary; and numerous were the ill-natured comments and epigrams which the public approval of "Blindman's Buff" elicited from rival exhibitors. The picture was, however, of so popular a kind, the grouping of the various figures was so life-like in its variety, the attitude of the rustics engaged in the sport so true to nature, and the whole interior such a triumph of the pictorial art, that Wilkie could afford to smile at the strictures of his envious competitors.

#### "THE VILLAGE FESTIVAL."

"The Village Festival," a picture so elaborate in its execution, and so characteristic of our artist's style in the grouping of its humorous figures, was painted for Mr. Angerstein, in the year 1812, and purchased by that gentleman for the munificent sum of £840. In the details of this celebrated *chef-d'œuvre* of the great domestic painter, we trace the peculiar workings of his mind, and perceive, at a glance, how deeply he had studied the habits, expressions, and idiosyncrasies of the rustic population whom he chose for his models.

It was at this time that Wilkie became a member of the Royal Academy, of which he had been admitted an associate in 1809, and that he opened, at Kensington, an exhibition of his pictures, which proved in the end, although it added to his fame at the time, a great failure as a financial speculation.

#### "THE JEW'S HARP."

"The Jew's Harp" was an earlier production; but, although the subject is less ambitious, and the details less elaborate than those of "The Village Festival," in finish and execution it is quite equal to any of Wilkie's later productions. The expression of wonder and interest in the faces of the two children, who are listening in rapt attention to the simple performance of the untaught musician,—the faithful minuteness with which the *entourage* of the mechanic in his interior is represented, and the accuracy with which every object in domestic use is disposed in its proper place, all evince the great powers of observation which the Scotch painter brought to bear upon his productions. "The Jew's Harp" is the property of the Marquis of Lansdowne, and is, we believe, the only picture by the great domestic painter in the Lansdowne collection.

Sir David Wilkie gained nothing by his study of the Italian and Spanish masters. His genius, like that of Hogarth, was for the delineation of national character, and is so truly original and perfect in itself, that, in all attempts at imitation, he destroyed the identity of his style. "The Entry of George IV. into Edinburgh," which he commenced before he left England on his professional tour, and finished after his return, is a proof of how much he lost in originality by his study of the old masters. The first part has all the minuteness of finish and elaboration of character and detail which constitute his peculiar excellence, and which have made him superior to all his rivals in the same style. The second part is a mere imitation in design and colouring of Titian and Corregio, and is therefore, inferior as a work of art to the original productions of his genius.

#### "THE PEDLAR."

In the reign of itinerant hawkers of goods, long before the introduction of railways and steamboats had almost annihilated time and space in travelling, and had so connected the most obscure and remote villages of the empire with the metropolis, that the wonders of our great emporium and everything useful and ornamental are no longer things of which people may have read and dreamed but could never hope to see—what an important person was the pedlar. His periodical visit was an event which by wives and spinsters in the country was looked upon as a kind of era in their lives. Upon the contents of his pack depended, in a great measure, the influence which the "fair" seller would be able to exert over their "unfair" husbands, lovers, or suitors; for all men, however the

may repudiate the "impeachment," are, more or less, under petticoat government, especially when the advantages of the toilette have made

"The mighty magnet set  
In woman's form more mighty yet."

With what eagerness was the unpacking of the pedlar's bales of goods watched by those who, in every kerchief, ribbon, scarf, *fichu*, band, or bracelet, saw an additional means of conquest. In the times, too, when the ways of communication between distant towns and villages were so difficult and dangerous, the pedlar was often the only medium of epistolary correspondence. Loving wives, whose industrious husbands were occupied at a distance in trade or commerce, and sentimental young ladies, who were separated from their lovers, saw in the pedlar a Mercury upon whose fidelity and discretion they could securely rely.

The pedlar, therefore, of the last century, such as he is represented in this characteristic picture by Wilkie, was an individual not to be slighted. It is true that he was often regarded with a less favourable eye by the goodman himself than by his wife and daughters. The attractive and showy articles which he unfolded to the admiring gaze of the women, often cost the *père de famille* much, both in purse and temper. In the engraving from the celebrated picture of "The Pedlar," the expression on the faces of the different actors in the scene is beautifully varied. The pedlar, who has just disclosed his many dazzling treasures, has all the women in his interest. A flowered chintz has arrested every female eye. The aunt, who has been spinning in the background, has put aside her work to gaze in wonder and admiration upon the glories of the fabric. Her uplifted hands show how deeply its powers of fascination have wrought upon her fancy. In the face of the *pater familias* is written, in legible characters, the history of his thoughts. He continues to smoke his pipe with unruffled dignity, notwithstanding the excitement of those around him, and while, with a disapproving look, he shows how much he dislikes the purchase, the position of his hand in his pocket, jingling his coin, is nevertheless indicative of his intention to gratify the vanity of the "womankind." The expression of the pedlar is the *ne plus ultra* of plausible hypocrisy; while apparently disclaiming any anxiety to part with the treasure, he is stimulating the eagerness and curiosity of his patronesses, by descanting on its variety and beauty.

The pedlar of Wilkie's picture is almost an extinct animal. Even in the colonies, the rapid growth of gigantic railways has rendered his visits unnecessary; and although in the back settlements of America a degenerate scion of the old stock may occasionally be seen, his business is more that of an itinerant vendor of cheap literature than of articles of female apparel, taste, or *bijouterie*. In many continental towns, the pedlar, or *colporteur*, has entirely changed his vocation, and is now employed by religious societies as an agent in disseminating their peculiar views of religion. The time, *par excellence*, of Wilkie's pedlar was that of which the uncouth poet wrote, when he said;

"Had you but seen these roads before they were made,  
You'd have lifted your hands, and blessed General Wade."

#### "THE LETTER OF INTRODUCTION."

In "The Letter of Introduction," the picture tells its own tale; and, indeed, is there any production of the master-mind of this great domestic artist which is not in itself a life's history? The humility in the expression of the face of the anxious aspirant to the favour of the great—the meekness with which he bears the "rich man's contumely"—the evident distrust, or rather suspicion, with which the old gentleman eyes the guest, whose presence, notwithstanding the unopened letter of introduction which he continues to twist in his hand, is anything but pleasant to him—are all graphically represented. The very dog takes his cue from his master, and shows, by his attitude, that he shares the old man's suspicions. The treatment which the bearer of the letter receives will, at any rate, be a trial of his patience; and the *tout ensemble* of the picture is suggestive of what all will have to pay, in the shape of mortified vanity and self-humiliation, who dance attendance upon the favour of the great. The disposition of the objects in the interior does credit to the observation of the artist. Nothing has escaped his watchful eye. Even to the vase of *pot pourri*, everything is in keeping; everything is introduced into the *tableau* that could promote or adorn the *otium cum dignitate* of the luxurious master,



### "THE ERRAND-BOY."

"The Errand-Boy" is more a picture of quiet every-day life, among that class from which Wilkie delighted to draw his subjects, than a *tableau* suggestive of any stirring or romantic incidents. There is a simple home look about the whole scene which recalls many a dreamy day passed in the secluded enjoyment of some quiet country residence. The loose, slouching attitude of the boy, who seems too lazy to sit upright on his horse, and who fumbles in his pocket for his letter,

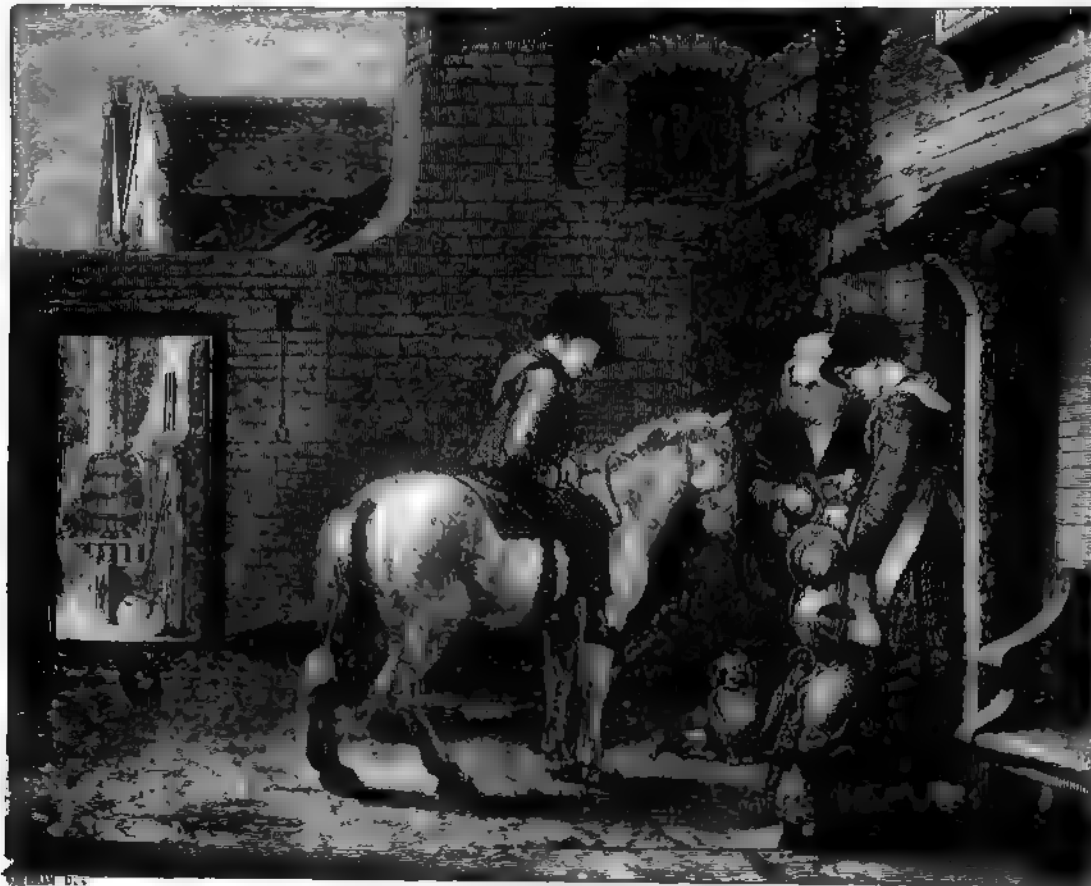


THE LETTER OF INTRODUCTION.

with an expression which shows that he has either lost or mislaid it—the curiosity in the face of the old crone, and the *insouciance* of the younger woman (who is entirely occupied with the child) as to message or messenger—are all life-like in their reality.

### "DUNCAN GRAY."

If Wilkie had not been a painter, he must have been a poet or a novelist. What an inexhaustible fund of *matériel* he possessed in his fertile imagination! What a keen appreciation of the humorous,



THE ERRAND-BOY. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR DAVID WILKIE.



DUNCAN GRAY. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR DAVID WILKIE.

the picturesque, and the pathetic has he not displayed in his "Duncan Gray"! The picture is an illustration of the simple and beautiful poem of Burns, but far more suggestive in its details than the tale upon which it is founded. We quote the poem at length, in order that our readers may perceive how skilfully the painter has developed the meaning of the poet, and, by the addition of numerous little touches, added to the effect of the different parts, while he preserved unimpaired the integrity of the whole :—

DUNCAN GRAY came here to woo,  
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't,  
 On blythe Yule night when we were fop,  
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't,  
 Maggie sweet her head fu' heigh,  
 Look'd asklent and unco skeigh,  
 Gart poor Duncan stand abeigh—  
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Duncan fleech'd, and Duncan pray'd,  
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't ;  
 Meg was deaf as Ailsa Craig,  
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't.  
 Duncan sigh'd baith out and in,  
 Gart his een baith bleer't and blin',  
 Spak o' lowpin' owre a linn—  
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Time and chance are but a tide,  
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't ;  
 Slighted love is sair to bide,  
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Shall I like a fool, quoth ha,  
 For a haughty himie dee ?  
 She may gae to—France for me !  
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

How it came let doctors tell,  
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't.  
 Meg grew sick—as he grew heal,  
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't.  
 Something in her bosom wrings,  
 For relief a sigh she brings ;  
 And O, her een, they spak sic things !  
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Duncan was a lad o' grace,  
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't ;  
 Maggie's was a piteous case,  
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't.  
 Duncan could nae be her death,  
 Swelling pity smoor'd his wrath,  
 Now they're crouse and canty baith—  
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

The contemptuous expression of Meggy's face, while, with a woman's instinctive quickness, she perceives the power which she has acquired over Duncan's heart, is in itself a history of the pains and perils of courtship. Duncan was as yet a novice in the art of wooing, and knew neither from hearsay nor experience the truth of the old French adage, "*Poursuivez les belles, elles vous fuient*," nor of those hackneyed lines of our Scottish poet—

"Oh woman, in our hours of ease,  
 Uncertain, coy, and hard to please."

He had been too *démonstratif* in his admiration, and had made Meggy too certain of her conquest for her to care a straw whether she offended him or not. He did not know the tyrannical nature of the fascinating creature who had captivated him, nor how little women are wont to value what they have had no difficulty in securing. "Time taught him a deep lesson," not that "she loved another," but that, to make her conscious of the value of the treasure she possessed in the genuine affection of one true manly heart, she must be made to fear the loss of it. In the expression of Duncan's face, in Wilkie's picture, there is a sad conviction of the necessity of a change of tactics. His attitude is no longer that of a man *empressé* in his devotion, and *tout aux petit soins* with the object of his affection, but of a reflective being who has formed a serious resolution, and is determined to be no longer the victim of a girl's caprice. It is in the faces of the two lovers that the artist has displayed his thorough knowledge of the impulses which actuate the human heart, a knowledge which, as we before remarked, must, if he had not been a painter, have found utterance in poetry or romance. In the parents of the fair *inamorata*, the painter has drawn nothing from the poet. They are entirely his own conception, and add greatly to the history of the scene. There is a gentle reproach in the expression of the mother's face, which implies that her daughter is trying too severely the patience and constancy of her young lover, while the father has a puzzled look of disapprobation, which plainly shows that he does not at all understand the position of affairs, or where the difficulty lies in the progress of a courtship of which all approve. The interior of the room proves how well Wilkie had stored his mind with recollections of that rustic population whose manners he loved to describe. Through the door ajar, the faces of two of the younger members of the family, peeping with all the eager curiosity which characterises their time of life, adds much to the completeness of the *tableau*. With the exception, perhaps, of "The Rent Day" and "Blindman's Buff," there is no picture in which Wilkie has displayed to greater advantage the peculiar characteristics of his style than in "Duncan Gray." With the habits of the Scotch peasantry of all ages and of either sex he was perfectly familiar, through the intercourse he had with them during his studies in Edinburgh at the Academy for the Encouragement of the Manufactures, and the knowledge of national character and customs which he then and there acquired gave a style and tone to all his subsequent labours.

"Duncan Gray" was one of the early productions of his genius. At the time that he painted it he is described as "a tall young man, somewhat pale, with light hair and keen blue eyes, mild and gentlemanly in his manners, peaceful and quiet in his actions, immovable in his resolutions, and of a delicate sensibility of temperament. His patience in striving after excellence was equal to his diligence in studying and working." He had a large share of that modesty which always accompanies real merit, and he therefore compensated by observation, study, and diligence for what, according to his own estimate of himself, he wanted in genius. He stored his mind with recollections, which returned with all the freshness of recent inspiration after long years of labour and study. Innumerable little details were impressed upon his mind, and treasured up, as it were, for future use. This faculty of observation, and this retentiveness of memory, characterise all his early pictures. The same chamber displays an impressive variety of scenes. The fire sparkles, the infant cries, the father does not return, the mother becomes anxious, the old uncle moralises or sleeps, the young man thinks of his amours or his pursuits, the hope of supper calls the old dog towards the hearth, and the servant, who has opened the window to fasten the shutter, resigns her hand to the tenderness of a rustic gallant. At one time his genius is exercised upon the comedy, at another time on the tragedy of domestic life. The furniture of the insolvent cottager is seized for rent, the very bed is about to be distrained, while the labourer, with sullen despair in his face, stands opposite to the bailiffs, like a figure of stone. This picture is in itself the tragical *dénouement* of a tale of touching interest. It is, indeed, in the truthfulness of the details that the charm of Wilkie's picture consists. However minute and varied the construction of the *tableau*, everything is in keeping. The parts all harmonise with one another, and make a uniform whole. He never allowed his imagination to neutralise the effects of his observation, but toiled at his daily task with the imperturbable patience and the monotonous exactitude of a workman. He was constantly improving, retouching, and polishing. He listened to the opinions of all men, and called all his recollections to the aid of his personal sagacity. He never sacrificed truth to effect, or introduced such anomalies as Arcadian shepherds and shepherdesses into the northern scenery of Scotland, for the sake of arresting attention at the expense of probability, but he faithfully represented the peasantry of his country as he had seen them himself in their rustic employments, in their recreation, amusements, and the various incidents of ordinary life. He was a legitimate follower of Van Ostade and Bega—only far more minute and truthful in his details—of Teniers and Bombache, of Holbein and Hogarth, combining their various beauties and perfections, but avoiding their defects and extravagancies.

#### "THE VILLAGE POLITICIANS."

The first *ébauche* of this celebrated masterpiece, of which the accompanying engraving is a faithful copy, was made by Wilkie, at Edinburgh, when he was only eighteen years of age. It was not, however, until some time after his arrival in London that, at the request of his patron, the Earl of Mansfield, he executed his elaborate painting from his early sketch. The artist had only asked, in the first instance, fifteen guineas as the price of his picture; but his noble patron, who did not wish to take advantage of Wilkie's modesty, advised him to consult his friends before fixing on a price. The painting, when finished, was displayed at the exhibition of the Royal Academy, which was then held at Somerset House, and produced so great a sensation, not only among the public, but also among connoisseurs and fellow-students, that Wilkie determined to double the sum he originally intended to ask for it. Lord Mansfield objected to this great advance in the price of his *chef-d'œuvre*, but "canny David" "cutely" reminded him of his advice, and told his lordship that he was now acting upon it. This picture established the reputation of Wilkie as an artist of first-rate genius in the delineation of national character. At the time of the exhibition of the "Village Politicians," there was a kind of *furor* among picture-fanciers and the public for paintings of a domestic character. In the "Village Politicians" the taste for this style of performance was amply gratified. The time represented is the outbreak of the first French revolution, the news of which has just reached the village in which the scene is laid. The youthful actor in the piece, who has put down his mug of ale and his pipe, in order to illustrate his oratory by his action, is dilating, with

"all the real  
That young and fiery converts feel,"

upon the recent occurrences in France. Opposite to him, at the same table, is seated an old man, reading the paper, from which he raises his eyes occasionally to look through his spectacles at the flushed and excited countenance of the speaker. There is a calm dignity in the expression of the old man, which is finely contrasted with the stormy vehemence and uncontrolled excitement of his young neighbour. Two rural politicians, at the other end of the table, are listening, with evident interest,



THE VILLAGE POLITICIANS. FROM A PAINTING BY MR. DAVID WILKIE.

to the arguments of the rustic orator. In the meantime, the figures in the back-ground are not idle: a dog, unconscious of "the greatest moral earthquake that ever convulsed or shattered this globe of ours," is following a child (whose expression betrays no cognizance of the momentous event), for something to eat. Another dog, in the fore-ground, has just succeeded in overturning some pots and pans, with the contents of one of which he is taking French leave.



—SCENE AT JOHN CASSELL'S ART TREASURES EXHIBITION.

### "THE RENT DAY."

Wilkie is, in his own department, the first painter of the age; and, with the exception of Hogarth, the most spirited and original master of the English School. His variety is infinite; in refinement he is vastly superior to Hogarth; and in the acuteness of his observation of what is characteristic in his subjects, he has nothing equal or second to him. Like Hogarth, he is strikingly dramatic, but in one important feature he differs from his great predecessor. Hogarth carried the action of his moral dramas through a whole series of pictures, each forming, as it were, an act in the piece he was representing, while the *dénouement* of the plot was contained in the last of the series. Wilkie, on the other hand, contents himself with representing his conception more after the manner of a novel, in one single and striking scene. Hogarth, like Swift, always took an unfavourable view of life, and contemplated mankind only on the dark side. A bitter vein of satire runs through all his productions, and he seems to take a genuine delight in representing his fellow-men in a state of the most frightful depravity and misery; while in Wilkie there is a genial warmth of sympathy with the passions, pleasures, frailties, and follies of the subjects he has selected for his models. In this respect he bears a close resemblance to his illustrious countryman, Sir Walter Scott. In that refined delineation of character which extends to the minutest particulars, the painter and the novelist were equally successful. Both were possessed of "hearts which had their arguments as well as their understandings," and which, therefore, throbbed rather with love and pity for the suffering sons of men, than with contempt for their weaknesses, or with exaggerated and cynical ridicule of their follies. In "The Rent Day," one of Wilkie's early and most successful *tableaux de genre*, the dramatic *minutiae* are very effective. The young widow, attired in the mournful habiliments peculiar to her bereaved condition, by the greatness of her sorrow and the modest dignity of her deportment, commands not only the respect but the indulgence of her landlord. She brings with her, her two fatherless children, of whom the youngest, seated in her lap, is nibbling a key, instead of a coral garnisher. There is no picture in the whole of his *répertoire* in which the Scotch artist has shown a greater affinity of mind, taste, and execution to the great Scotch novelist than in "The Rent Day." They both knew how to appreciate and describe the genial happiness which hallows and embellishes the narrow circle of domestic life, and both understood how, with masterly skill, by the admixture of delicate traits of good-natured humour, to heighten and refine the charm of such scenes. Whenever they descend into the vale of tears, and paint in the glowing language or colours of their respective *métiers* the afflictions of mind or body to which man is heir, their pathos is always genuine, and their humour never of a kind which is degrading to their subject or revolting to humanity. In such scenes as "Distraint for Rent," exhibited by Mr. W. Wells, Wilkie's benevolence and humour are conspicuous. There is none of that exaggeration and caricature which, in Hogarth, may please the cynic and the satirist, but can never leave an agreeable impression on a well-conditioned mind. The picture is highly tragic; but notwithstanding the energy of expression, and the truly dramatic interest of the piece, the whole of the details are confined within the limits of truth.

This *chef-d'œuvre*, when first exhibited at Somerset House, created quite a *fureur* in the English public for pictures of a genuine national character. The impressive and tottling nature of the conception, the skill with which the painter has elaborated the *minutiae* of the scene, and, above all, the truthfulness of the attitudes of the actors, and the life-like expression of their faces, riveted the attention of the spectators, and established Wilkie's reputation as the most spirited and faithful delineator of the peculiarities of rural life in England.

Wilkie has many of the excellencies, without sharing in the defects, of the Dutch painters of common life of the seventeenth century. In that careful and complete working out of the details which distinguish "The Rent Day," he reminds us of Douw and Franz Mieris. In the spirit and freedom of his touch he is on an equality with Teniers and Jan Steen. There was, however, in the expression of Wilkie's face none of the refined humour which is so refreshing and arresting in his pictures. Like Sir Walter Scott, to whom we just now compared him, he was a humorist of that high rank in whom the fundamental tone of the character is pure benevolence and real love of mankind. Among humorists of this superior stamp, the genuine bias of the mind alone manifests itself externally, while the *espiglerie* of the disposition is hid within the recesses of the bosom.

## "THE RABBIT ON THE WALL."

During the short interval of peace which succeeded the battle of Toulouse, Wilkie accompanied his friend Haydon to Paris, for the purpose of studying the works of the great masters in the gallery of the Louvre. He was a warm admirer of the Dutch and Flemish schools, and in the style which he adopted after his return to England we see evident traces of the effect which the study of the *chefs-d'œuvre* in France had produced upon his mind. "The Rabbit on the Wall," painted about the year 1815, has much of the sharpness and precision of Teniers and Metzui. The productions of the French painters themselves, however, excited in him but little enthusiasm. Poussin and Claude he certainly admired, but never condescended to imitate. As his chief merit consisted in the truthful delineation of character, he scarcely appreciated at their just value the ideal and classical beauties of another school of art. David, who had achieved so high a reputation in Paris, was never a favourite of his; and on that account it is that he preferred the Museum at the Hague, which he visited in the year 1816, to all the glories of the Louvre.

## "THE GENTLE SHEPHERD."

"The Gentle Shepherd," contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by Wilson Craig, Esq., is a painting in a different style to those early *tableaux de genre* which made Wilkie's reputation. The figures are larger, far more distinct, and less numerous; but still, in the *entourage* of the shepherd, there is an attention to detail which reminds the spectator of Wilkie's youthful efforts, before the study of the ancient masters had modified his style. The younger of the two women is listening in earnest attention to the melody of the rustic musician, whose face, while he modulates on his pipe the favourite airs of the happy "Auld Lang Syne," wears an expression of reproachful sorrow. Is it that Estelle (to use the names of Florian's hero and heroine in his favourite pastorelle) has given her constant Nemorin well-grounded cause for reproach and jealousy? Has she favoured the suit of some richer and more powerful rival, after plighting her troth to, and bestowing the first and gushing affections of her maiden heart upon, the companion of her infancy, the playmate and protector of her girlhood, and the straightforward and manly suitor of her ripening years? If so, the "gentle shepherd" is evidently bent upon awakening in her breast a sense of the sacred nature of her engagement to him, through the influence of those notes which have so often delighted her under happier auspices. There is no mean supplication in the attitude or expression of Nemorin—no abject humiliation at the shrine of a scornful and inconstant maid. He trusts to the powerful influence of music upon the imagination and feelings of Estelle, and if music fails he will try no other philtre. But the charm is already working, and the air has produced the effect he intended.

"Oh! how welcome breathes the strain,  
Waking thoughts that long have slept,  
Kindling former smiles again  
In faded eyes that long have wept!

"Like the gale that sighs along  
Beds of oriental flowers,  
Is the grateful breath of song,  
Often heard in happier hours.

"Filled with balm the gale sighs on,  
Though the flowers have sunk in death:  
So, when pleasure's dream is gone,  
Its memory lives in music's breath."

## "THE CUT FINGER."

For ease, reality, and characteristic grouping, "The Cut Finger" ranks with Wilkie's happiest efforts. We doubt whether his elaborate pictures give greater proofs of his acuteness of perception. The minds of men of genius are, as it were, the mirrors of the beautiful and the true. Their impressions are reproduced in poetry, music, or painting, for the edification and delight of mankind. With the exactness of the daguerreotype, but with far more life and spirit, Wilkie immortalises the homes



of his countrymen. He has not sought his subjects in palaces or mansions, where fashion now produces tedious and unpicturesque uniformity. Had he done so, we doubt whether even his genius could have roused such deep emotions as are conjured up by the pencil of his great predecessor,



THE RABBIT ON THE WALL, FROM A PAINTING BY SIR DAVID WILKIE.

Hogarth. To have the power of awakening deep feelings, we must ourselves possess them, and we have no reason to suspect Wilkie of too much sensibility. But, judging from the importance and effect given to accessories in all Wilkie's pictures, we feel convinced that Hogarth's style had been thoroughly

studied by him. Examine "The Cut Finger." A farmer's wife might make an inventory from it of all things necessary for her *ménage*. It was not enough to succeed in giving the exact expression to every face in the group, Wilkie knew the importance of small things, and is never guilty of any neglect of detail. It is owing to this exactness, that the more we gaze on Wilkie's pictures the

THE CUT FINGER. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR DAVID WILKIE.



more we admire them ; but of course the arresting beauty of his cottage scenes consists in their truthfulness. We can fancy we hear the old dame assuring the boy she will not hurt him, if he will only stand still. The boy, in roaring agony, negatives all attempt at consolation, and, but for the gentle coercion of the farm-servant, would not have been brought within the influence of the aged female surgeon. But, in our opinion, the face in this group, demonstrating the greatest refinement of talent,

is that of the elder brother, whose countenance expresses at once his horror of the wound and his intense interest in the operation.

#### "THE CHELSEA PENSIONERS."

From the age of fifteen, Wilkie had worked with unremitting assiduity at his *métier* of artist, and had advanced in wealth and reputation, until his fortunes reached their culminating point about the year in which he painted, for the Duke of Wellington, "The Chelsea Pensioners," which is considered his masterpiece, and the last of his really great works. The picture represents a group of Chelsea pensioners reading in the *Gazette* the despatches of the duke, after the battle of Waterloo. The subject was highly popular, and the execution of the picture is careful and elaborate. The necessary particulars were furnished by the conqueror himself, who superintended the arrangement of the groups, and remunerated the artist with princely liberality. For this picture Wilkie received from the "hero of a hundred fights" twelve hundred guineas; and as "The Chelsea Pensioners" was the best thing which even Wilkie had yet produced, he was not overpaid. This success seems, however, to have been the turn in the tide of his prosperity. His sister, to whom he was devotedly attached, and in whose sorrows he participated as though they were his own, was at this time plunged in the deepest despair by the sudden death of her betrothed husband, when on the very eve of their marriage; and as "misfortunes love a crowd," the death of his mother, to whom he owed all his success in life, followed close upon the shock of his sister's bereavement. Two of his brothers died the same month, one in the East Indies, and the other on his return from the Canadas. The death of the last brother involved Wilkie in a loss of a thousand pounds, as he had been security for him to that amount. A third brother failed in business; and shortly after the occurrence of these complicated misfortunes, the bankruptcy of Hurst and Robinson, the booksellers, deprived Wilkie himself of £1,700, the hard-earned proceeds of his genius and industry. Such an accumulation of miseries undermined his constitution; and as the shattered state of his nerves rendered application to business impossible, he determined, in obedience to the advice of his friends and medical advisers, upon trying the effect of a lengthened tour upon the Continent.

#### "SIR WALTER SCOTT AND FAMILY."

The large picture of "Sir Walter Scott and his Family," of which the engraving we insert is a faithful copy, was painted by Wilkie during the course of the visit which he paid his native land in 1817. The likenesses are admirable; but the picture, as a whole, possesses few of the peculiarities of Wilkie's style. There is much that is characteristic about Sir Walter Scott himself, and the Dandie Dinmont figure of the giant who is addressing him is very well conceived; but good as is the effect of the *tableau*, we still feel that Wilkie was travelling out of the track which Nature had designed for him when he attempted portrait painting.

#### "THE BLIND FIDDLER."

"The Blind Fiddler," exhibited in 1807, was painted with all the spirit and confidence of acknowledged and successful genius. "The Village Politicians" had at once established the fame of that David Wilkie, of whom Jackson, the painter, in 1805, writing to Haydon, said: "There is a raw, tall, pale, queer Scotchman come—an odd fellow—but there is something in him; he is called Wilkie."

Wilkie very soon let the world know that there was indeed in him something that the world had seen only in Teniers, and that the humour of the young Scottish painter, then about twenty, had in it that subtlety and pathos, that versatility and variety, in which even Teniers is deficient. Still it was a picture of Teniers that aroused in the breast of the quaint young Scotchman the *anch'io son pittore* feeling, and to that feeling the world owes "The Village Politicians," and all the masterpieces of Wilkie's pencil. A sudden and great success makes a change, not merely in the estimation in which we are held by others, but, what is far more important, in that in which we hold ourselves. Triumph and failure alike try of what metal we are made.

It had been the custom of the students to ridicule—in modern parlance to quiz—Wilkie, whose broad Scotch accent, cautious, parsimonious habits, lank red hair, and raw-boned figure, exposed him to every species of joke and jeer, while he was on an equality with them. But the divine right of genius

is more widely felt and acknowledged than that of kings—"a divinity does hedge" the acknowledged master or monarch of any branch of high art; and Haydon, writing of Wilkie, after he had exhibited "The Village Politicians" to a charmed and astonished world, and while he was engaged on that great masterpiece "The Blind Fiddler," says, "When Wilkie came among his old friends again, his Scotch friends commenced their old jokes; but, alas! Wilkie had proved his great genius, and their jokes fell dead. Some looked at him with mysterious curiosity, others were silent; and Wilkie drew on, quiet and self-possessed, without appearing to notice their failure. He had, and he deserved to have, a complete triumph. We were all chapfallen, and deserved to be so. Let students be cautious how they quiz external peculiarities, until they are certain what they conceal."

Wilkie's habits of self-concentration, close study of his art, and simple almost rustic *naïveté*, were unimpaired by the brilliant success of his *début*; and although his own attempts at becoming a beau were ridiculous enough, and provoke a smile, and we laugh to hear of his "talking grandly," buying new coats, and dressing like a dandy, there is something very touching in the fact that his first thoughts, on receiving a cheque for thirty pounds (the sum with which Lord Mansfield so miserably underpaid him for "The Village Politicians"), were turned towards his mother and sister; and he, with rustic triumph, showed his friend, spread out in glittering array, two new bonnets, two new shawls, ribbons, satins, &c., to delight his female relatives, astonish the natives of Cutts, and shine in the parish church of which his father was the minister. "The Blind Fiddler" was painted for Sir George Beaumont. The mother of the baby was painted (as we have noticed below, in the extracts relating to Wilkie, out of Haydon's autobiography) from a remarkable girl named Lizzy, who lodged in Rathbone Place, above some friends of Wilkie, and who, possessed of a fine person, a masculine mind, devoted nature, pure heart, but daring defiance of custom, became the intimate associate of that band of young brothers in art, of whom Wilkie was the chief—made tea for them, carved, marketed, occasionally sitting to them, arguing with them, ever able to hold her own, sympathising in all their trials, glorying in their triumphs, "and giving," says Haydon, "a zest and intensity to our thoughts and our arguments." The then Lizzy, who was a sister to all, and respected as such, but who ultimately married a well-born, fascinating Frenchman, one of this strange brilliant clique—she, this young and handsome girl, so interesting as the only woman intimately associated with those happy days in Rathbone Place, she sat for the mother in Wilkie's "Blind Fiddler." The old man near the wall was taken from a study of a gamekeeper, by Haydon. The picture is carefully painted, and admirably grouped; in 1807 it was the great attraction of the exhibition.

Wilkie was essentially a painter for the million. His genius was a hardy plant, nourished in poverty. For a great part of his early life he was too poor to procure animal food, which was too great a luxury for the son of a poor Scotch minister. The influences of his humble origin tintured his views, and acted on the whole of his brilliant career. With regard to his character, his virtues sometimes degenerated into failings. His economy nearly became meanness, and his prudence selfishness. One of his most intimate friends remarks of him: "Never was such simplicity, such genius, such prudence, such steadiness, and such inconsistency united."

The intense labour, evidenced by the perfection of his pictures, is the more meritorious, as his health was delicate. True, he had no domestic cares to distract his attention. He was heard to observe that "when he married, it would be a matter of interest." Probably he never met any woman rich enough to lure him from the sweet liberty of bachelorhood. Nevertheless, when basking in court favour, his high reputation must have procured him many good opportunities. Not that his portraits of royalty added to his fame. The "*tableau de genre*" was his style, and a reviewer of the day, alluding to his picture of William IV., exclaimed with justice—

" Wilkie, the Teniers from old Scotia's shore,  
Wilkie paints kings, and Wilkie is no more."

But the numerous pictures, in which his own peculiar genius shines forth, are a handsome legacy to his country. They have hitherto been quite unapproached, and we fear they will long remain so, but should any embryo geniuses in this style exist among us we cannot do anything more likely to foster their growth than to disseminate, in this cheap form, these masterpieces of our great artist.

He visited France and Switzerland, but without loitering on his road; for Italy, "the mother of

arts and arms," was the goal of all his hopes. He tarried eight months in the land which produced Raphael and Michael Angelo, but the productions of these great Italian masters failed to excite in him the enthusiasm which connoisseurs have either feigned or felt about them. The works of Titian and Giorgione, which he studied at Venice, were more to his fancy, and in all his subsequent productions he endeavoured to imitate their peculiarities of style and beauties of colouring. After leaving Venice, he traversed Germany, and carefully examined the treasures of art contained in the galleries of Dresden.



SIR WALTER SCOTT AND FAMILY. FROM A PAINTING BY MR DAVID WILKIE.

He travelled through Bohemia and Austria, and after storing his mind with the study of everything worthy of observation at Prague and Vienna, he returned to Rome, where he completed three pictures in a style entirely different from anything he had attempted before. In the year 1827 he crossed the Pyrenees, and while at Madrid painted four pictures, which bear evident traces of the effect which the study of the Spanish masters had produced on his impressionable and imitative mind. He returned to England in 1828, and exhibited at Somerset House, in 1829, all the pictures which he had executed

luring his long residence abroad. His intimate friend and *collaborateur*, Haydon, thus alludes, in his own autobiography, to the change which his travels had effected in his style :—

"July 22nd, 1829. Had a very pleasant two hours indeed with Wilkie, looking over his Spanish pictures, and had one of our usual discussions about art. The worst is one never can find out Wilkie's genuine opinion upon art. He is always influenced by his immediate interests or convenience, whatever that may be. Now it is all Spanish and Italian art. He thinks nothing of his early and beautiful efforts—his "Rent Day," his "Fiddler," his "Politicians"; they are not carried far enough, as for anything on earth, in point of expression and story, was ever carried farther. Italian art is to him quite new, and he comes out, to his own astonishment, with notions and principles which, to those who began as I did with Italian art, are quite a settled and old story. At the same time there is great liberality in Wilkie, for he keeps nothing to himself, and, right or wrong, always communicates his thoughts to others."



THE BLIND FIDDLER. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR DAVID WILKIE.

The next entry in Haydon's diary gives some insight into Wilkie's character :—

"March 1st, 1830. Spent an hour with Wilkie very delightfully. Since his return from Italy he seems tending to me very much. We got mutually kind to-day, and mutually explained. The only quarrel we ever had was about that arrest. I was too severe and he too timid. We ought to have made mutual allowance for our respective peculiarities. He had dined with me the night before. We had drunk success to my marriage. We parted mutually friendly. The next morning I was arrested by a printer, to whom I had paid £120 that year, for the balance of £60. It was the second time in my life. The bailiff said 'Have you no friend, sir?' 'Certainly,' said I, and at once drove to Wilkie's. Where ought I to have driven? Whom ought I to have thought of? 'I thought it would come to this,' said Wilkie; and, after a great deal of very bad behaviour, he became my bail. When roused,

I am like a furious bard of ancient days. I poured forth such a furious torrent of sarcasm and truth that I shook him to death. Wilkie told me to-day it sank deep into his mind, and never left him for months."

In the course of this year, Wilkie, who was now devoting himself to portrait painting—a style in which he never succeeded—was, by the King's appointment, made Serjeant Painter. He was at this time a candidate for the presidency of the Royal Academy, vacant by the death of Lawrence. "The moment," says Haydon, "that I saw his name in the *Gazette*, I knew it would destroy his chance of success." Haydon was right. Wilkie had only two votes, while Shee, the other candidate, had eighteen. In the year 1836 he received the honour of knighthood from William IV. About this time he visited Ireland, and "The Peep-o'-day Boy's Cabin," which he painted after his return, is a picture of Irish inspiration. "Mary, Queen of Scots" and "The Cotter's Saturday Night," of which the subject is taken from Burns's poem, were the most characteristic *tableaux de genre* executed at this time. In 1840 he set out on his fatal journey to the East. He steamed down the Danube, and reached Constantinople in the beginning of 1841. Thence he travelled to Jerusalem, and in the middle of April proceeded by the sea-coast of Syria into Egypt. At Alexandria his health began to fail, and towards the end of May he embarked on board the "Oriental" for England. At Malta he indulged too freely his appetite for fruit, which brought on an increase of his illness, and on the 1st of May, 1841, he died.

In the autobiography and memoirs of B. R. Haydon we read the following interesting account of the untimely death of our great domestic artist:—

"It was at this time" (May 11th, 1841), says the editor of Haydon's autobiography, "that the news of Wilkie's death reached England. Haydon was deeply shaken by the loss of his old friend, for, despite rooted differences of character and long estrangements, he had a true and deep regard for Wilkie, as I believe Wilkie had for him. The thought of this death dwelt in Haydon's mind for months, and hardly any entry of the journal for the rest of the year but contains some allusion to it."

"May 12th.—Read prayers, and prayed for the soul of my dear old friend David Wilkie. The last week I have been at Dover, and one evening, at Warren's library, in the *Chronicle*, I read an account of the 'Oriental's' arrival. I rapidly ran over the names and did not see Wilkie's. I read on, my heart literally thumping against my side, till I came to 'Sir David Wilkie expired in the Bay of Gibraltar.' A painful trembling seized me. I had begged and entreated him before he went, to be cautious of such a journey. I begged him to read Madden, to understand the nature of the diseases, and consider his weakness of constitution; in fact, I all but predicted his death. In my mind, privately, I felt convinced he would not return, and said so to my family. Poor dear Wilkie! with all thy heartless timidities of character—with thy shrinking cowardly want of resolution, looking as if thou hadst sneaked through life pursued by the ghosts of forty academicians—thy great genius—our early friendship—our long attachment through thirty-six years—thy touching death and romantic burial brought thy loss bitterly to my heart."

There was no other artist of the time with whom Wilkie was on terms of such intimate and even daily intercourse as Haydon; and if the bias of his own morbid mind had not tinctured his views, and the jealousy of a successful rival in the profession warped his judgment, there is no one who could have given a fairer estimate of Wilkie's merits, as an artist and a man. We must, however, take everything that Haydon has written about his friend *cum grano salis*, and recollect if Wilkie was occasionally less ready to grant than Haydon to apply for assistance, that constant calls upon the purse are apt to sour a man's temper. Haydon's autobiography is, however, valuable, notwithstanding these drawbacks, to all the admirers of Wilkie, on account of the many particulars it contains of the Scotch artist's early life in London, of his hopes, his fears, his rapid progress, and his brilliant success.

We said that Haydon's autobiography contained some interesting memoirs of Wilkie's early progress in London. Before we dismiss the subject of the Scotch painter and his pictures, we will give, in a rival artist's own words, the history of Wilkie's first triumphs. "The exhibition time of 1806 approached, and Wilkie began to make a great noise. Sir George described him as a young man who came to London, saw a picture of Teniers', went home, and at once painted 'The Village Politicians.' That was the wonder, 'at once.' 'At once, my dear Lady Mulgrave, at once!' And off all crowded to the little parlour of No. 8, Norton Street, to see the picture painted by the young Scotchman, who

never painted a picture or saw one until the morning when he saw the Teniers, and then rushed home and produced 'The Politicians!'

"Personal appearance is everything in life. A good air and confident modesty make a great impression. Wilkie was a pale, retiring, awkward, hard-working, and not over-fed student. The women did not report well to each other of the artist, but his picture was wonderful! The last day for sending in the pictures arrived, and Jackson told me that he remained late at night endeavouring to persuade Wilkie to send his picture in, but such was his timidity and modesty that he really did not seem to believe in his merit, nor had he fully consented when Jackson took his leave. However, to the Academy it went. \* \* \* \* On the Hanging-day the academicians were so delighted that they hung it on the chimney, the best place for a fine picture. On the private day there was a crowd about it, and at the dinner, Angerstein took the Prince up to see it. On the Sunday (the next day) I read in the *News*, 'A young man by the name of Wilkie, a Scotchman, has a very extraordinary work.' I was in the clouds—hurried over my breakfast—rushed away—met Jackson, who joined me, and we both bolted into Wilkie's room. I roared out 'Wilkie, my boy, your name's in the paper!' 'Is it re-a-l-y?' said David. I read the puff—we huzzaed—and, taking hands, all three danced round the table until we were tired. By those who remember the tone of Wilkie's 're-a-l-y,' this will be elished. Eastlake told me that Calcott said once to Wilkie, 'Do you not know that every one complains of your continual re-a-l-y?' 'Do they re-a-l-y?' 'You must leave it off.' 'I will, re-a-l-y.' For heaven's sake don't keep repeating it,' said Calcott; 'it annoys me.' Wilkie looked, smiled, and in the most unconscious manner said 're-a-l-y.'"

Moore has beautifully sung, and the public verdict has endorsed the truth of the song, that

"There's nothing half so sweet in life as Love's young dream."

We question whether the poet ought not to have made an exception in favour of the sensations of that aspirant after fame who, fired with a noble ambition, and conscious of the possession of that *Divina particula aurea*—"genius," goes to bed at night an obscure, unknown, and nameless individual, and awakes next morning and finds himself famous. Wilkie would not have bartered the intoxicating delight of his first triumph for all the joys that reciprocal affection has ever conferred upon happy lovers. Wilkie's fit of idleness did not last long. After a few days spent in inactive wonder at his own success, he said to Haydon, "I have been just very idle," and so for a couple of days he set to, heart and soul, at "The Blind Fiddler," for Sir George Beaumont. "The progress of this production," says Haydon, "I watched with delight. I conceived the world must be right, and if I could not see his superiority that I must be wrong. I therefore studied his proceeding as he went on, and gained from him great and useful knowledge. 'What is this, and that, and that for?' brought out answers which I stored up. His knowledge in composition was exquisite. The remarks he made to me relative to his own works I looked into Raffaele for, and found them applied there, and then it was evident to me that Wilkie's peasant pictures concealed deep principles of the *ponere totum* which I did not know. It was through ignorance and not superior knowledge that at first I could not perceive his excellence. This was a great and useful discovery. I found this 'thin, tall, bony fellow,' as Jackson called him, a great master at twenty. But his eye for colour was really horrid. He put a beastly yellow in his flesh, he had no feeling for pearly tints or *impasto*. His flesh was meagre, thin, dirty mud. We used to argue about glazing and pure preparation of tint without yellow. I painted an old gamekeeper (the model of the old grandfather by the fire in 'The Blind Fiddler'), and then glazed it. Wilkie was so delighted, he borrowed my study, and tried the fiddler's right hand *without* yellow, toned it, and really it was the only bit of pure colour in the work. He was candid enough to say that I had greatly assisted him in that point, and told a friend that my study of the head had been of great service, which I believe, for I have always had an eye for colour (first taught by Jackson) which Wilkie never had."

The Art Treasures Exhibition is rich in the productions of Wilkie's genius; but many of his masterpieces are nevertheless absent from the collection. Among those contributed by different proprietors, of which we have given illustrations in our Wilkie numbers, are "The Jew's Harp," by W. Wells, Esq., "The Letter of Introduction," by Bonamy Dobree, Esq., "Blindman's Buff," by Her Majesty the Queen, "The Rent Day," by John Chapman, Esq., and "The Gentle Shepherd," by Wilson Craig, Esq.,





"THE TWO DOGS," FROM A PAINTING BY SIR EDWIN LANDSEER.  
(By permission of Mr. Groubet.)

## SIR EDWIN LANDSEER.



SIR EDWIN LANDSEER was born in the year 1801, and is now in his fifty-seventh year. He was the son of an engraver, and, like the generality of those who have afterwards distinguished themselves, either in poetry, painting, or music, he showed an early predilection for that branch of art in which he has since attained such high repute.

"The Intruder," which is at present in the collection of Sir P. de Malpas Grey Egerton, was painted by Landseer when he was only sixteen years of age, and gave decided promise of future success. Sanguine, however, as were the expectations which were formed of the artist from this boyish production of his genius, no one as yet foresaw the brilliant future that awaited him, or discovered in his efforts that extraordinary power which has enabled him to distance every rival, and has conferred upon him the well-deserved title of "*Le Raffaele des chiens*." As early as 1831 he was elected a member of the Royal Academy, and the exquisite skill he displayed in representing upon canvas, with life-like accuracy, some of the Highland ponies upon which the royal children were accustomed to ride, and some of the pet dogs belonging to their august parents, so endeared him to the Queen, that, in 1850, he received the honour of knighthood at her hand.



DIGNITY AND IMPUDENCE. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR EDWIN LANDSEER.  
(By permission of Mr. McLain.)

The subject of this brief biographical sketch is a great favourite with our transatlantic cousins. There is indeed no corner of the civilised world in which he is not acknowledged to be the first animal painter of the age; but in America his *chefs-d'œuvre* command as high prices, and are as much the subject of competition, as in England itself. We find from a New York circular that, in 1848, at a sale

of some pictures belonging to a Mr. W. Simpson, three of Landseer's earlier works were sold in that city; one, a small painting on a panel, five inches by four, representing "A Scotch Terrier with a Rat in his Mouth." Small as the painting was, it was bought, after much competition, for 367 dollars. Another, on canvas, called "Waiting for Orders," which was a small full-length portrait of Mr. Simpson's coachman, fetched 168 dollars; and the third, entitled "The Roddock," representing an old chestnut horse and a white Scotch terrier, near a pond, with a distant view of Windsor Castle, a finely executed work and full of character, brought 525 dollars. Our readers will judge from these facts how great is the value the Americans set upon the smallest, and most unimportant, productions of Landseer. Sir Edwin is now in the full tide of success, and with a genius and execution which time and experience have refined and perfected. He has lost none of the fire and brilliancy of his youth, but he has the judgment, labour, and research, of ripened manhood. His "Rough and Ready," in the exhibition of the Royal Academy this year, is quite as happy in conception as anything he ever attempted, and we think connoisseurs will agree with us in our opinion that it is, in execution, the most perfect of all his *chefs-d'œuvre*. Long may he retain, in unimpaired health of mind and body, the power of delighting the world with these yearly additions to his unequalled *repertoire* of animal portraits.

#### "THE TWA DOGS."

In the engraving with which we commence our illustrations, "The Twa Dogs," there is a whole volume of meaning. The two animals are intended as types of their species: the one, sleek, thoroughbred, petted, and prized for his beauty, is in strong contrast with the rough, crop-eared, and mongrel cur, who, without friends, home, or occupation, shows, in his shaggy person and in his lantern jaws, how badly the world has treated him, and how little he owes to the smiles of fortune. One could almost imagine, from the expression of their faces, that the thoroughbred was descanting, before his half-savage and degenerate cousin, upon the blessings of civilised life, and upon the great advantages in canine society of purity of breed, and of an aristocratic pedigree of undoubted authenticity. His graceful and easy attitude, and his well-feathered paws crossed in the fashion most approved among dogs of high lineage, show how thoroughly he is satisfied with himself and his condition. The attitude of the mongrel is that of a dog who listens with impatience to the history of enjoyments in which he can never hope to share; and who, while he dissembles his envy, feigns no small amount of contempt for a friend who is compelled to wear round his neck a badge of slavery in the shape of a collar. Upon his own throat there is no yoke, and he is therefore fully justified in retaliating upon the thoroughbred by praising, with canine enthusiasm, the liberty he enjoys.

"His mongrel heart was of a mould  
Which in a dungeon had grown cold,  
Had his free breathing been denied  
The range of the pure mountain-side."

There is, notwithstanding the disadvantages of his birth and position, something noble in the way in which he disclaims all wish to participate in what he knows he cannot get, and asserts, with canine independence, the superiority of that vagabond life and uncertain fare, to which liberty gives a zest, over any species of captivity, however luxurious may be the bed and abundant the board. It is evident that the thoroughbred is taken rather aback by this view of their relative positions; and that, although he cannot admit the force of mongrel's arguments, he does not know exactly how to answer him. Who but Landseer could have thrown so much expression into a dog's face, or have written so legibly, on canine features, the history of a dog's thoughts?

#### "LAYING DOWN THE LAW."

This is, perhaps, one of the most elaborate of all Landseer's productions, and is intended to illustrate the proceedings of a court of law, in which judge, counsel, clients, &c. &c., are all dogs of different breeds. The case is evidently a point of law upon which his lordship has to decide, and not a matter of fact, which would have gone before the jury. Council on both sides have delivered their arguments, and the last speaker, a heavy-browed black dog of the retriever race, overcome with the

weight of his own eloquence, has fallen into a gentle slumber, quite convinced, as he no doubt is, that after the unanswerable arguments he has adduced, the decree of his lordship must be in favour of his client. The judge, a dignified poodle of the French breed, with a natural wig that would have done credit to a Burleigh, after a brief perusal of his notes, has laid down his glasses, and, with his white and feathered paw on the book of precedents, and an expression of stern resolution on his canine features, is pronouncing his decree. On either side of the table are stationed the opposing counsel and their clients. The winning party may be known by the qualified and triumphant expression of their faces, while their unfortunate antagonists are proportionately depressed and indignant. In the eye of the bull-dog there is something dangerous—an expression of determined malignity, coupled with a consciousness of power, which makes us feel that he would be an awkward customer for a successful opponent to meet in a lonely spot, while he was still smarting under the mortification of a recent defeat. The demonstrative rage of the bull-dog has awakened in a greyhound near him—who is junior counsel on the losing side, and who bears the same resemblance to the bull-dog that Mr. Silvertongue would to Sergeant Bluster—some anxiety as to the effect which such ebullitions may have upon the court. There is a deprecatory expression in the glance he gives his learned brother, which implies that, for the sake of all, he must at any rate control his indignation until he is safe out of the judge's hearing. A wolf-dog, who is equally enraged at the decree, which he declares is contrary both to law and equity, is addressing his remarks upon the case, in an undertone, to a mastiff, who seems, by the impassive expression of his face, to look upon defeat as an evil to which all in the profession must occasionally submit with temper. Indeed, the equanimity with which he resigns himself to a misfortune he could not avert, suggests the idea that he is not unused to such reverses. A spaniel, who has a "devil-may-care" look about him, is turning everything into ridicule—court, counsel, and clients; and the merry twinkle in his eye is skilfully contrasted with the calm and stately dignity of the judge. An usher is leaning over the partition, and enforcing order among witnesses and loiterers while his lordship is speaking. Another officer of the court is waiting for the conclusion of the judgment with a missive for the judge. The head of the client, half concealed by the seat of justice, may be seen peering with an eye of intense anxiety upon the proceedings in which he is so deeply interested. He is evidently too nervous about the issue to show himself more openly.

What an almost miraculous knowledge of the peculiarities of the numerous varieties of the canine species is displayed by Landseer in this complicated and elaborate picture! Who but the "*Raffaello dei chiens*," himself could have conceived such a scene, or, having conceived it, could have ventured upon the execution of the picture?

#### "DIGNITY AND IMPUDENCE."

This celebrated painting of Landseer is the contribution of Jacob Bell, Esq., to the Art Treasures Exhibition. The subjects represented are a huge mastiff and a Scotch terrier, contemplating, from the same kennel, the objects which are passing in the yard before them. The face of the mastiff expresses that calm indifference to all external objects which is inseparable from a lofty and noble nature.

"Si fractus illabatur orbis,  
Impavidum ferient ruinae."

In "Impudence," or the Scotch terrier, how different is the effect which passing events have upon the canine perception. At every sound he pricks up the remnants of his cropped ears, or rather the long hair which stands in lieu of those prostituted organs. He barks at everything that passes, and shows his teeth and growls when anything he is not familiar with approaches him.

He tries to unite with all the immunities of weakness the privileges of power, and, relying upon the protection of the powerful mastiff at his side, he insults, with the snappishness of the cur he is, friend and foe, stranger and sojourner. He shows in this respect a spirit similar to that which we discover in many who cannot plead as their excuse his want of reason, but who, abject in adversity, and overbearing in success, like the terrier of Landseer, are too mean and powerless to excite anything but the contempt of those whom they attack.

No artist of any age or country has ever surpassed or even rivalled Landseer in his power of describing, with life-like reality, the characteristics of the animal world. The study of the physiognomy,

habits, and instincts of the brute creation is as difficult and engrossing as that of the human form divine, or of inanimate nature in its ever-varying phases. The painter of horses, dogs, deer, and feathered game finds that, in the walk of art which he has chosen for his own, perfection is a plant of very tardy growth; and that the artists who have achieved any enduring reputation as painters of animals are but few and far between, compared with those who have gained wealth and reputation as portrait or landscape painters. The difficulties, however, which have to be overcome render success in this style the more honourable and lucrative; and the fame and fortune which Sir Edwin Landseer



LAYING DOWN THE LAW. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR EDWIN LANDSEER.

(By permission of Mr. McLane.)

has realised in this department of art are a sufficient proof that the public are as ready to recognise genius in one style as in another. There are obstacles in the way of becoming famous as a painter of animals which would daunt a man of timid disposition, and effectually check his progress. To represent the deer such as we see him in "The Stag at Bay," "The Sanctuary," "The Death of the Stag," or "Coming Events," how acute must be the powers of observation, how assiduous the study of the habits of the animal, and how continual the attendance at his haunts, paths, and pasture-grounds. With dogs the study is less arduous, as they are domesticated with us, can be watched, and have the varying expression of their faces analysed and copied at leisure. With the red-deer, the subject of Landseer's

masterpieces, the case is very different. The animal is shy, suspicious, and savage. To approach him at all is difficult, and, without danger, impossible. And yet what long years must have been spent in communion with this fierce denizen of the forest, before the artist could produce so perfect a representation of his every action and attitude as we see in "The Stag at Bay." Every trait of character, every instinct of the race, has been learnt as it were by rote, and committed with faithful exactitude to the canvas.

THE GENTLE SUSPENSE. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR LAURENCE VANDERMEER.



"HIGH LIFE."

This beautiful and carefully-executed engraving, from Landseer's celebrated picture, represents a thorough-bred stag-hound, the property of his Royal Highness Prince Albert. The noble and intelligent animal is surrounded by all those appliances of rank and wealth which adorned the high life of mediæval times. Here we see revived forms and fashions which are only known to us through the medium of tradition.

"The knights are dust,  
 Their good swords are rust,  
 Their souls are with the saints, we trust."

But though time has on its irresistible tide washed away every vestige of the days of knight-errantry, joust, and tournament, Landseer, in the picture before us, has reproduced, with a careful attention to historical accuracy, a chamber scene of the date of Richard Cœur-de-Lion. One could almost fancy that Brian du Bois Gilbert or Philippe de Malvoisin had tenanted such a room in the beleaguered **Castle of Front de Bœuf**. The knight's helmet and trusty sword, his steel cuirass and his gauntlet, his illuminated missal, his luxurious couch, the splendid hangings of his chamber, and the view of the castle tower, with his banner floating from the keep, are in harmony with the sleek and high-bred appearance of the deer-hound, who occupies with the air of legitimate authority the seat of his absent master. How full of meaning have the pages of "Ivanhoe" made such scenes as these? The popular style, unflagging interest, varied descriptions, irresistible pathos, and winning humour of Sir Walter Scott are as much appreciated by the million as by the millionaire; and Sir Edwin Landseer, in representing such a scene as that before us, has described nothing which (thanks to the universal dissemination of Scott's novels) will not be equally admired and equally well understood by high and low, rich and poor, gentle and churl. There is a fascination about the times of chivalry which connects it closely with the descriptions of aristocratic life. Knighthood in those days was really a distinction. The honour was only conferred upon men who, after a long course of training in the use of their weapons, and after sundry proofs of self-control, courage, and refinement of mind, were deemed worthy of the name. In these degenerate days it may be something to be a knight of an order, but so little to belong to the order of knighthood, that many decline the offer of a title which they see borne by so many *roturiers*. The *pose* of the deer-hound is exquisitely graceful, and reveals that union of strength and activity for which the animal is remarkable. What a contrast is the corresponding picture.

#### "LOW LIFE."

The time of this exquisitely truthful and humorous impersonation in the fat, coarse, unwieldy mastiff of "Low Life" in England, is the present day. What a picture of unmannerly bearing, untutored disposition, uncontrolled passions, and vicious self-indulgence, is the face of this brute? His eye half-destroyed in some disgraceful brawl; his tongue lolling with vulgar impudence out of one side of his mouth; his unwieldy carcass—gross and dropsical, through the gratification of all his brutal appetites; his bandy legs, and the impudent defiance of his attitude, are in keeping with the *encouragement* of the domicile. A pewter pot, with a pipe protruding from its rim; a pair of coachman's heavy top-boots, misshapen like the foot they are made to encase; the unwieldy butcher's block which serves for a table; the black bottle, and the horn-handled blade, are all in character, and prove that the dumb representative of "Low Life" has only borrowed the fierceness and vulgarity of his disposition—of which we see sufficient proof in his hardened features, and in the surly expression of his squinting eye—from the human brute, who, though his master, and a lord of the creation, is but little removed from him in the intellectual scale. These two masterpieces would alone have immortalised Landseer, had nothing from his brush either preceded or followed them. When, however, we turn to those great and complicated *chefs-d'œuvre*, "Peace" and "War," we are amazed at the versatility of his genius, and can scarcely comprehend how the same fancy could have conceived, the same ingenuity have planned, and the same hand have executed subjects so different in kind as "High Life" and "Low Life," "Peace" and "War." These two paintings, which have already achieved a world-wide reputation, were executed to the order of that Mr. Vernon who was so enthusiastic a patron of fine arts, and who has since bequeathed his splendid collection of pictures to the nation. He gave Landseer £3,500 for the two paintings, and a similar sum has been since paid for permission to engrave them, of which one-third was handed over to Mr. Vernon for his consent. "Whoever," says a celebrated critic, "views these pictures, so entirely unlike all that could be anticipated, will at once feel that it is not mere talent but genius that has here achieved a triumph." The "clever artist," for a portraiture of war, would have given us, in minute detail, all the horrors of a battle-field, or of a sacked city. Landseer presents us

only with the desolated gardens and smouldering ruins of a peasant's cottage. Yet how fearful a memorial is this of the devastating and blighting plague of war? Our painter did not follow out the popular idea of painting war in all its pomp and panoply; he does not describe a tented field, a glorious victory, or a disastrous defeat; but he brings home to the mind of the spectator the desolation and misery which accompanies this scourge of humanity. He represents a garden once redolent of flowers, and the peaceful haunt of those whose study was to cultivate and beautify it, suddenly transformed into a chaos of crumbled walls, charred and prostrate roof-timbers, blackened trees, and shattered windows. The broken flower-pots, with their crushed and scattered roses, speak a whole volume of meaning.

“And there lay the steed with his nostrils all wide,  
Though through them there rolled not the breath of his pride.”

The rider of this black war-horse has been crushed by the falling of the rafters; and another steed, which once bore that handsome trooper in safety through the field, who now lies helpless and buried under the roof-beam, is writhing in the agonies of death. As we gaze upon this scene of horror, the beautiful but humiliating description in the “Siege of Corinth” of a battle-field after the battle is over, recurs with peculiar significance to the mind.

“Alp turned him from the sickening sight,  
Never had shaken his nerves in fight;  
But he better could brook to behold the dying,  
Deep in the tide of their warm blood lying,  
Scorched with the death-thirst and writhing in vain,  
Than the perishing dead who are passed all pain.  
There is something of pride in the perilous hour,  
Whate’er be the shape in which death may lower;  
For Fame is there to tell who bleeds,  
And Honour’s eye on daring deeds.  
But when all is o’er, it is humbling to tread  
O’er the weltering field of the tombless dead;  
To see beasts of the field, and fowls of the air,  
Worms of the earth, all gathering there—  
All regarding man as their prey,  
All rejoicing in his decay.”

From such a scene we turn with a curious revolution of feeling to the calm and soothing picture which embodies the idea of “Peace.” The foreground of the scene represents the cliffs north of Dover. The castle is farther down, and the port below may be seen with its line of buildings stretching into the sea; while on the horizon of the summer sky dawns the dim outline of the Calais coast. The verdant table-land and grassy slopes of the cliff are covered with herds of goats and flocks of sheep, white and fleecy; while frisking kids and playful lambs—basking in the sunshine, or wantonly tearing the herbage they are too well supplied with to crop—give an appearance of peace, plenty, and security to the scene, which is in strange and striking contrast to the horrors of the corresponding picture of war.

This pastoral assemblage is intrusted to the care of a boy, a girl, and a child. So perfect is the sense of safety from all outward aggression, that the most feeble of our race suffices for the protection of all this valuable live-stock. The worsted which the little girl is winding, the housewife, and the toy boat, are evidences of the peaceful pursuits of these guardians of the flock. The cannon—rusty, useless, and dismounted—shows that the demon of war, which once haunted this lovely land, has ceased to harass its tenants; and a lamb cropping the grass which, instead of “bullets wrapt in fire,” is peeping from the cannon’s mouth, is significant of the change which has come over the scene. The blue sea in the distance reflects the azure of the sky, and is “calm as a mill-pond,” though here and there dotted with white and wing-like sails. It is, indeed, almost impossible to translate into language the peaceful serenity which characterises every feature of this exquisite composition. When we turn from the complicated and startling horrors of the war scene to this sweet and characteristic landscape, the mind recovers the balance which had been so fearfully shaken, and settles down again into a feeling of ease, comfort, and security. The copyright of the engravings from these two celebrated pictures





HIGH LIFE. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR EDWIN LANDSEER, R.A.

(By permission of Messrs. Goupil.)



LOW LIFE. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR EDWIN LANDSEER, R.A.  
(By permission of Messrs. Grouse.)

belongs to Messrs. Graves, of Pall-mall, who paid three thousand guineas for the privilege of reproducing them—so high is the estimation in which the public hold, even at second-hand, the conceptions of this great painter.

#### "THE STAG IN THE TORRENT."

"The Stag in the Torrent" is a picture in quite another style, and of the kind in which Landseer first achieved his high reputation. In "Peace" and "War," he travelled a little out of his accustomed track; for the purpose, we should imagine, of convincing the world that his genius was of a nature so versatile and comprehensive, as to enable him to execute with equal skill a painting in any style. In "The Stag in the Torrent," of which the accompanying engraving is a faithful copy, Landseer brought the experience of a long life of study and reflection to his aid. The animal represented is one of those noble and antlered lords of the forest—the red-deer of Scotland—who are so graceful and symmetrical in their form, so powerful in their strength, and so unrivalled in their fleetness and activity.

The subject of this painting has evidently outlived the dangers and fatigues of a long day of pursuit; for the rays of the setting sun but dimly illumine the scene of the stag's last efforts to escape from his persevering and undaunted pursuers. He has dashed across rivers, swum lakes and meres, bounded over the hills, and flown through the vales; but thews, sinews, and muscles of flesh could sustain him no longer, and he fails at the most critical moment—in his attempt to ford a torrent at the outlet of a lake. Still he is victorious even in the moment of defeat. One of his most daring foes lies gasping in the agonies of death under his quivering hoof; and although another still hangs, with the pertinacity of the race to which he belongs, upon the neck of his victim, it is not from the tooth of this breathless and now powerless deer-hound that "The Stag in the Torrent" will receive the "*coup de grâce*." His glazed and heavy eye—the convulsive efforts with which he draws his breath—his faltering step, and collapsed form—show plainly that the struggle of nature is nearly over. If memory ever dwells in the brain of the antlered monarch of the wood, we should almost fancy that the retrospective glance he casts at the hills, lakes, and valleys in the distance, is a last and sad farewell to the scenes he may never more revisit. The setting sun, when it shall rise again on the spacious deer-walks and lonely glens, in which he so long luxuriated, will find him no longer the fleet and graceful tenant of his haunts, but, baited to death by his cruel pursuers, "the Stag in the Torrent" will have yielded up the life for which he ran so fleetly and fought so fiercely, among the cataracts into which he plunged for refuge.

Stag-hunting has always been a royal and aristocratic recreation, and when it is pursued for the legitimate purpose of supplying the table with the flesh of those creatures who were given to man for his food, we can but regret that it involves so much animal suffering. When, however, the pursuit of the stag, and the exciting nature of the sport, are the only incentives to the chase, we cannot but feel that the huntsman is abusing the privileges which were intrusted to him for far different purposes. These noble animals were certainly not endowed with those exquisite sensibilities, which Landseer with his magic touch can represent so faithfully and pathetically in the expression of their faces, that they might be made the victims of our caprice and cruelty. If the poet has the approbation of all men of heart, reflection, and refinement, when he declares—

"I would not enter on my list of friends—  
Though graced with polished manners and fine sense—  
The man who needlessly sets foot upon a worm,"

What sentence must we pass upon those who can place their highest enjoyment in inflicting upon creatures so much higher in the sentient scale, and so beautifully formed by nature for the adornment of the wild scenes which they inhabit, the lingering tortures which at last closed the life of "the Stag in the Torrent"? Of all the sinful propensities of man's fallen nature there is not one

"Which sooner springs into luxuriant growth,  
Than cruelty—most devilish of them all!"

The chase of the stag has not even the excuse of that favourite but questionable sport, fox-hunting; since foxes are vermin, mischievous in their habits, and destructive of life and property. We have,

therefore, authority for exterminating them—"a necessary act incurs no blame;" but the symmetry of form, the gracefulness of action, and the interesting habits of the red-deer, when allowed to expatiate in their own wild and romantic gleus, plead powerfully in their favour, and give to the wanton caprice which inflicts upon them such acute and protracted suffering, a most odious criminality. Landseer, in exhibiting this noble creature in so many characteristic scenes, has awakened the interest of all who are not inoculated with a sportsman's indifference to animal suffering, in favour of the stag.

There are many other favourite pictures by this renowned artist, which we should feel a pleasure in describing if we had space sufficient—such as "Bolton Abbey in the Olden Time," with the engraving of which every one is familiar who has ever glanced at the display in the windows of our principal printsellers; or "The Pets," which represents a familiar and pleasing picture of beauty and innocence. The little maid, with that love of animals which is one of the characteristics of childhood, is feeding, out of her own hand, a shy but frisking fawn, which, although tame and docile before her, would fly like the wind at the approach of any unknown footstep. A kitten is playing with the riband which dangles from the neck of the fawn, and thus gives a *tout ensemble* of primitive innocence to the scene which it would be impossible to heighten or improve.

Ruskin, in that portion of his "Modern Painters" which he styles "The True Ideal," under the head "Grotesque," gives a striking instance of how a man with such a natural genius for animal painting as Landseer possesses, would, by the sheer power of inspiration, surpass in execution all that mere routine could suggest. The subject under discussion is the truthfulness of the mediæval and the classical griffin. They are both pieces of existing sculpture: the first, viz., the mediæval, carries on his back one of the main pillars of the porch of the cathedral of Verona; and the other is on the frieze of the Temple of Antoninus and Faustina at Rome. The first is Lombard-Gothic, and the second is Roman-classical architecture. "The difference is," says Ruskin, "that the Lombard workman did really see a griffin in his imagination, and carved it from life, meaning to declare to all ages that he had verily seen with his immortal eyes such a griffin as that; but the classical workman never saw such a griffin at all, or anything else, but put the whole thing together by line and rule." This striking position he proves in the following manner:—"You know," says he, "that a griffin is a beast composed of lion and eagle. The classical workman set himself to fit these together in the most ornamental way possible. He accordingly carves a sufficiently satisfactory lion's body; then attaches, very gracefully cut wings to the sides; then, because he cannot get the eagle's head on the broad lion's shoulders, fits the two together by something like a horse's neck (some griffins being wholly composed of horse and eagle); then, finding the horse's neck look weak and unformidable, he strengthens it by a series of bosses like vertebræ in front, and by a series of spiny cusps like mane on the ridge; next, not to lose the whole leonine character about the neck, he gives a remnant of the lion's beard turned into a sort of griffin's whisker, and nicely curled and pointed; then an eye probably meant to look grand and abstracted, and therefore neither lion's nor eagle's; and finally an eagle's beak, very sufficiently studied from a real one. The whole head, it seems to him, somewhat wanting in weight and power, he brings forward the right wing behind it, so as to inclose it with a broad line. This is the finest thing in the composition, and very masterly both in thought and in choice of the exactly right point where the lines of wing and beak should intersect (and it may be noticed, in passing, that all men who can compose at all have this habit of encompassing or governing broken lines with broad ones wherever it is possible, of which we shall see many instances hereafter). The whole griffin, thus gracefully composed, being, nevertheless, when all is done, a very composed griffin, is set to very quiet work; and raising his left foot to balance his right wing, sets it on the tendril of a flower so lightly as not even to bend it down, though, in order to reach it, his left leg is made half as long again as his right."

Now, let us see how the Lombardic sculptor, with a genius for designing animals with all their characteristics similar to that of our own Landseer, fashioned his griffin. We must remember that the griffin, though part lion and part eagle, has the united powers of both. He is not merely a bit of lion and a bit of eagle, but whole lion incorporate with whole eagle. "Accordingly," says Ruskin, "we see that the real or Lombardic griffin has the carnivorous teeth bare to the root, and the peculiar hanging of the jaw at the back, which marks the flexible and gaping mouth of the devouring tribes."

\* \* \* \* \*

"While his feet are heavy enough to strike like a lion's, he has them also extended far enough to give

them the eagle's grip with the back claw ; and has, moreover, some of the bird-like wrinkled skin over the whole foot, marking this binding power the more, and that he has verily got something to hold with his feet, other than a flower. He is, primarily with his eagle nature, wide awake ; evidently quite ready for whatever may happen ; and with his lion's nature, laid all his length on his belly, prone and ponderous ; his two paws as simply put out before him as a drowsy puppy's on a drawing-room hearth-rug ; not but that he has something to do with them worthy of such paws, but he takes not one whit



THE STAG IN THE TORRENT. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR EDWIN LANDSEER, B.A.  
(By permission of Messrs. Grouse.)

more trouble about it than is absolutely necessary. He has merely got a poisonous winged dragon to hold, and for such a little matter as that, he may as well do it lying down and at his ease, looking out at the same time for any other piece of work in his way. He takes the dragon by the middle, one paw under the wing and another above, gathers him up into a knot, puts two or three of his claws well into his back, crashing through the scales of it, and wrinkling all the flesh up from the wound, flattens him down against the ground, and so lets him do what he likes."

By the light of a genius similar to that which inspired Landseer in his "High Life" and "Low Life," the Lombardic workman saw the beast in his own imagination—"saw him," says Ruskin, "as plainly as you see the writing on this page, and of course could not be wrong in anything he told us of it." In the wings, which, being an eagle's wings, are made to fly fast; in the throat, which, as the griffin is compounded of eagle and lion, must be flexible enough to allow of his swallowing rather large pieces at once; in the ears, which are so placed as not to catch the wind, or give the ear-ache to the animal while flying; every particular in the mediæval eagle is right, because the Lombard sculptor followed, as Ruskin tells us, his imagination, which could not err. And it is with Landseer as it was with the Lombard. In everything he conceives and executes



THE WIDOWED DUCK. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR EDWIN LANDSEER.

(By permission of Messrs. Graves.)

he follows the directions of his own imagination, and thus he brings out of the canvas "the positive creature, errorless, unquestionable," such as we see him in "Dignity and Impudence," "The Sanctuary," and "The Stag in the Torrent."

#### "THE WIDOWED DUCK."

The shot has told. There lies the wild drake stretched upon his back, his claws contracted, and his beak open, writhing in the agonies of death. The duck, startled by the sound of the gun, takes in at a glance, with the quick instinct of affection, the whole melancholy event, and heaves from the

depth of her bereaved bosom one of those plaintive notes which speak as forcibly as language could do her inconsolable grief. Her attitude is most expressive; the wings extended, not for flight, but with the electric power of the shock, and her form raised for a moment from its prone and awkward position into all the majesty of woe. Many birds are no doubt fickle in their sexual relations; but it is nevertheless true that the instinct of mutual affection is sometimes strongly developed in them, so strongly, indeed, that the hen-bird has often pined to death after the loss of her mate. With birds, especially of the wild duck species, there is a difference among individuals similar to that which we remark among men. Some of them are more intelligent, more affectionate, more mindful of benefits conferred or injuries received than others. The wild duck, so graphically represented by Landseer in the painting from which our engraving is copied, is a proof that in attachment to its mate, a bird can feel as deeply as a dog, who has been considered by naturalists as the most susceptible of animals. We have known many ducks, who, in tameness and discriminating perception of persons and things, were quite on a par with pets of the canine race. We recollect an instance of a duck who obeyed no voice but that of her owner, whom she followed everywhere, and for whom she would wait at the door when her mistress on a Sunday had entered the church, until a servant came to fetch her home.

## J. E. MILLAIS, A.R.A.



JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS, whose *chefs-d'œuvre* contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition we are now illustrating, was born in Portland Street, Southampton, on the 8th of June, 1829. His childhood was passed in France and the Channel Islands. Jersey was, we believe, the spot in which his passion for fine art first exhibited itself; "and battles, troopers, desperate combats, and gorgeous but impossible knights" were the especial theme and delight of his pencil. His parents, who appreciated the promising genius of their son, took him to London, and, by Sir Martin Shee's advice, he entered the establishment of Mr. Sass (now kept by Mr. Carey, son of the translator of Dante), a school of art preparatory to the Royal Academy, in which the majority of our young artists receive their first rudiments. After a few months' instruction from Mr. Sass, Mr. Millais gained admission, at the early age of eleven, to the Antique School of the Royal Academy.

In 1848, when only fourteen years of age, he gained the antique medal; and four years afterwards the gold medal for the best oil picture, "The Benjamites Seizing their Wives." In the same year he contributed to the exhibition of the Royal Academy "Elgiva Branded;" and at Westminster Hall, "The Widow's Mite." At the exhibition of 1848, Mr. Millais was not a contributor, and in 1849 commenced that attempted revolution in the style of painting known by the name of the pre-Raphaelite movement. Mr. Millais, in conjunction with W. Holman Hunt and Dante G. Rossetti, like another triumvirate, conspired against the whole system which in French is called the "*Renaissance*," and in English means the changes introduced by Raphael and his followers. They really believed, or feigned to believe, that in representing things as they appear and not as they are, the artist was guilty of a dereliction of high art principle, and that the Raphael or "*Renaissance*" school had carried the reform which their master introduced to such an extent as to render them careless of truth.

Ruskin, who is the zealous and powerful advocate of the pre-Raphaelite school, in his "Modern Painters," under the article "Landscape," remarks "all the *Renaissance* (i.e. Raphaelite) principles of art tended to the setting beauty above truth, and seeking for it always at the expense of truth. And the proper punishment of such pursuit—the punishment which all the laws of the universe rendered inevitable—was that those who thus pursued beauty should wholly lose sight of beauty. All the thinkers of the age declared that it did not exist. The age seconded their efforts, and banished



beauty, so far as human effort could succeed in doing so, from the face of the earth and the form of man. To powder the hair, to patch the cheek, to hoop the body, to buckle the foot, were all part and parcel of the same system which reduced streets to brick walls and pictures to brown stains. One desert of ugliness was extended before the eyes of mankind, and their pursuit of the beautiful, so recklessly continued, received unexpected consummation in high-heeled shoes and periwigs—Gower Street and Gaspar Poussin."

The school, of which Millais may be said to be the master, was the reaction in painting from the state which Ruskin has so graphically and humorously described. In his scene from "Keats' Isabella" he broke loose, with extraordinary skill and no small amount of artistic genius and originality, from the fetters of routine, and repudiated all the tyranny of conventionalism. The public, taken completely by surprise, scarcely knew whether to praise or condemn. The boldness, however, and decision with which the "anti-Renaissance," or pre-Raphaelite, disciples asserted the truth of their principles, carried with it considerable weight, for the world is always ready to be convinced by those who *prove* that they are in earnest; and though the success of the school still trembles in the balance, all admit that the movement has effected a beneficial reform among artists, who were becoming every year more and more careless in the working up of their productions. In 1850 Mr. Millais produced, in the same style, "Ferdinand and Ariel," "a portrait composition," and "a symbolic incident in connection with the Holy Family." This last was so entirely a pre-Raphaelite conception, and so radically at variance with all the principles of the "Renaissance," that it provoked severe criticism,

#### "THE PROSCRIBED ROYALIST."

The painting from which this beautiful engraving is copied represents a scene in the time of the Commonwealth. The Royalist, whose head is peeping from the hollow of the gnarled and knotty oak, is one of that aristocratic band who, with an entire devotion for, and loyalty to, the monarch in whose divine right they thoroughly believed, were willing to sacrifice, in the cause of kings, rank, fortune, family, home, hearth, and even life itself. Hunted by men and dogs, with a price set upon their heads, concealing themselves by day in the holes and hiding-places of their own forfeited estates, and at night wandering through the ruined, dismantled, and desolate castles or halls in which they had so often feasted the very men who were now pursuing them like fleshed hounds eager for their blood, they retained of all they once possessed nothing but their birth and breeding. The maiden, whose bountiful hand the fugitive cavalier is saluting with so much gallantry and affection, though now meanly clad, and without any of the outward appendages of her station, has in her air and gait a certain stamp of nobility which no one can mistake, and none could counterfeit. Her visit to the hollow trunk of the tree, though made stealthily, and evidently fraught with danger both to herself and the young cavalier, to whom she seems like an angel of comfort, compensates, in his estimation, for all the dangers and miseries he has endured. Nursed in the lap of luxury, the object of a thousand anxious cares and eager hopes, accustomed to the watchful attention of obsequious menials, who gathered their tone and bearing from the expression of their master's eye, and whose whole duty in life was to anticipate his every want, and gratify his every wish—he is now dependent upon chance for the very necessities of life. Crushing as is the change, and painful as are his privations, he has intervals of enjoyment, few and far between, but so exquisite and new to him that he would not barter them for the restoration of all that he has lost. One of these moments of happiness Millais has immortalised in the scene before us. There is in the eye of the maiden an anxious expression as she glances from the tree which incloses in its worn and aged bosom all that she most cherishes on earth, down the avenue through which she has stolen to this dangerous rendezvous. The country far and near is in possession of Cromwell's emissaries. The home of her fathers is occupied by bands of armed troopers, ever on the watch for the fugitive proprietors of the confiscated estates. Even the park itself, in which the meeting takes place, has probably spies at every turn, and roundhead detectives in every thicket, who at this very moment may have discovered the lurking-place of the wanderer, and be ready to denounce both him and his ministering spirit. But love scoffs at danger, and never calculates consequences. "*Amour, amour, quand tu nous tiens, adieu la prudence,*" or, Anglicé—

"Oh love, when we foolishly listen to you,  
To prudence we bid an eternal adieu."





THE PROSCRIBED ROYALIST. FROM A PAINTING BY J. E. MILLAIS, A.R.A.

HENRY LINTON DEL.

JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS.

45



THE ORDER OF RELEASE. FROM A PAINTING BY J. E. MILLAIS, A.R.A.

he cheeks of the young cavalier are so hollow and worn with fasting and vigil, that his eyes appear almost supernatural in size. They are, nevertheless, lighted with an expression of hope and joy as he salutes the lovely hand that brings him, in fear and trembling, the coarse but welcome food that love has provided for him. In the working up of this interesting picture, the pre-Raphaelite attention to minute detail is peculiarly pleasing and effective. Every leaf, every twig, every blade of grass, every line, crevice, or excrescence of the bark of the old tree, is designed with an exactitude and truthfulness highly creditable to the industry and talent of the artist. It is possible that, in following out the principle of the school to which he belongs, Mr. Millais may even in this picture have described things rather as they are than as they appear; but the perspective of the piece is so limited, and the conception of the scene is so striking, comprehensive, and perfect, that we see only the improvements effected by the pre-Raphaelite *anti-renaissance*, without any of its startling incongruities. The anticipation of such another visit will cheer the lonely and fugitive wanderer through the long hours of solitude and privation; and though he would not perhaps exclaim with one poet—

“Oh that the desert were my dwelling-place!  
With some fair spirit for my minister;  
That I might all forget the human race,  
And, hating no one, love but only her.”

He may, perhaps, feel with another, whose muse had a more Christian inspiration—

“The wildfowl is gone to her nest,  
And the beast has laid down in his lair;  
Even here is a season for rest,  
And I to my cavern repair.  
“There is mercy in every place;  
And mercy, encouraging thought,  
Can give to affliction a grace,  
And reconcile man to his lot.”

#### “THE ORDER OF RELEASE.”

This touching scene describes a romantic incident of the time of the celebrated insurrection of '45. A formidable resistance to the supremacy of the House of Hanover had, as our readers are aware, been organised in Scotland, under the Chevalier de St. George, with his army of wild and insubordinate Highlanders, who, although through their chiefs they acknowledged him as their liege lord and sovereign, would, at the nod or beck of those chiefs, whom they in reality alone looked upon as their masters, have as willingly turned their weapon against Charles Edward himself as against the reigning monarch whom they were in arms to dethrone.

Walter Scott, in his “Waverley, or 'Tis Sixty Years Since,” has in his own graphic style recorded many an incident in the rebellion of '45 similar to that which Millais has immortalised by his pencil. The captive soldier is a Highlander, probably taken prisoner after the bloody defeat of Culloden, & the troops of that Cumberland whom the Scotch of the time, on account of the exterminating nature of the warfare he carried on, were wont to designate as the “Butcher Duke.” The wife of this victim of his chief's ambition, or mistaken loyalty, is painted to the life. She is a true Scotchwoman in her attitude, features, and figure. But although there is nothing foreign in her appearance, the lifelike quality of her head and form are as fine as those of a pre-Raphaelite Madonna. The position of the child, lying in entire unconsciousness of the important nature of the visit its mother is now paying to her incarcerated husband, is perfect. The great attraction of this picture, however, is the mingled expression of triumph and tenderness in the face of the woman—the triumph with which she presents to the soldier, who acts as gaoler, the order of release, for which she has no doubt toiled, wept, and fasted and fainted at the great man's door, and the tenderness of her attitude in supporting her husband overcome with emotion. Her naked feet show how ill provided she has been for a journey south, in which the all-prevailing power of woman's love, faith, and endurance could have sustained her. The prospect of procuring the release of her husband smoothed the dang

compensated for the privations of her weary journey; and, with this goal in view, she was prepared to risk all, brave all, endure all. The features of the husband himself are partly concealed to give full effect to the figure and face of the wife. The eagerness of the dog to lick the hand of the liberated Highlander is admirably conceived. He knows nothing of all the agony and self-sacrifice through which that release has been purchased, but he is quite alive to the pleasure of recovering his long-lost master.

#### "AUTUMN LEAVES."

"Autumn Leaves," painted last year, and contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by J. Miller, Esq., is perhaps one of the greatest triumphs hitherto achieved by any disciple of the pre-Raphaelite school. In the faces of the young girls—who are themselves spring-flowers of human growth in the May-day of life—there is a variety of expression, and a winning softness, grace, and simplicity, which would alone establish Mr. Millais's reputation as an artist of first-rate genius. Every leaf—every petal of the floral display which Nature, in her autumnal liberality, has so variously supplied, is defined with the minuteness which characterises all our artist's later productions. Three of these fair specimens of the gentler sex are

"Like the sweet moon on the horizon's verge,  
Young maidens on the eve of womanhood."

"The girl has fewer summers." Their whole attention is riveted upon the dahlias and myrtles which they are stowing away in their capacious basket; she, with a rosy-checked apple in her hand—the ripe produce of the fruitful season—has one eye for the flowers and another for the fruit, which appeals more directly to the predilections of her time of life.

Any one unacquainted with the peculiarities of this style, would be startled by the sharp and abrupt outline of the poplars in the distance. The whole of this landscape exhibits what Ruskin (the pre-Raphaelite advocate) calls the wholesome, happy, and noble—though not noblest—art of simple transcript from nature, into which, he adds, "so far as our modern pre-Raphaelitism falls, it will indeed do sacred service in ridding us of the old fallacies and componencies, but cannot itself rise above the level of simple and happy usefulness. So far as it is, to be great it must add—and so far as it is great, has already added—the great imaginative element to all its faithfulness in transcript; and for this reason, pre-Raphaelitism, as long as it confined itself to the simple copying of nature, could not take the character of the highest class of art. But it has already almost unconsciously supplied the defect, and taken that character in all its best results; and so far as it ought hereafter, it will assuredly do so, so soon as it is permitted to maintain itself in any other position than that of stern antagonism to the composition teachers around it. I say, 'so far as it ought;' because, as already noticed in that same place, we have enough, and to spare, of noble, *inventful* pictures. So many have we, that we let them moulder away on the walls and roofs of Italy, without one regretful thought about them. But, of simple transcripts from nature, till now, we have had none,—even Van Eyck and Albert Durer having been strongly filled with the spirit of grotesque idealism; so that the pre-Raphaelites have to the letter fulfilled Steele's description of the author who determined to write in an entirely new manner, and describe things exactly as they took place."

The landscape in this picture by Mr. Millais certainly answers Mr. Ruskin's quaint definition of pre-Raphaelitism; it is designed in an entirely new manner, and things are described exactly as they are, and not as they seem. We are no converts to the principles these innovators have endeavoured to establish, for if they are right, the mathematical demonstrations which prove the theory of optics, of which perspective forms part, must be wrong. Pre-Raphaelitism is, therefore, in antagonism with mathematical truth, and must, in principle, be false. But though we reject their arguments as untenable, we acknowledge the beneficial effect which their attention to minute detail has had upon the painters of the present day. Conventionalism would have made of all these exquisitely designed specimens of autumn flowers nothing but "brown stains;" and it is on this account that the pre-Raphaelite advocate declares that the title of "dark ages given to the mediæval centuries is, respecting art, wholly inapplicable. They were," says he, "on the contrary, the bright ages, ours are the dark ones—I do not mean metaphysically, but literally. They were the ages of gold, ours are the ages of



AUTUMN LEAVES. FROM A PAINTING BY J. E. MILLAIS, A.R.A., CONTRIBUTED BY J. MILLER, ESQ.

umber." "Autumn Leaves" is a grand piece of sombre colour. It is unexceptionable in the limpid serenity of its horizon and the purple grandeur of its evening hills; but the green of the grass and the red in the foreground of the figures would, under such an aspect of the sky, be impossible.

The pre-Raphaelites have, we must confess, effected a considerable improvement in the general style and working up of our *renaissance* artists. We are no admirers of the school: we never saw much beauty in those pre-Raphaelite productions, "The Battle of Spurs," or "The Coronation of



SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS IN HIS ROBES AS DOCTOR OF CIVIL LAW. FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF.

(Contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by the Royal Academy.)

James IV. of Scotland;" nor can we approve of the principle of representing things as they really are, and not as they appear. Still, much as the revival of an obsolete style of painting and drawing astonished the world some few years ago, there is no doubt that a closer attention to the minor parts of a picture greatly enhances the effect of the whole.

John Everett Millais, from whose beautiful designs our engravings are copied, is perhaps the most attractive and most genuine artist of the pre-Raphaelite school. He is an enthusiast

in the cause he advocates; and, like all who are really possessed of genius, he promotes, with the energy and vigour of his enterprising mind, the success of his *idée fixe*. In these engravings all the effect of attention to minute particulars is seen, and we have an excellent illustration of the beauties, without the drawbacks of the style. Not so with the pieces he has this year contributed to the Exhibition of the Royal Academy. They, on the contrary, contain, with few of the advantages, almost all the defects of that curious *ante-renaissance* of which we may consider Mr. Millais the chief. The first is a dream of the past, "Sir Ysambras at the Ford." The metrical romance of "Sir Ysambras" is evidently a poem of pre-Raphaelite production, and the same may be said of the painting, which, though finished with a care and attention to small things, which must have involved an incalculable amount of industry, is, nevertheless, not pleasing as a *tout ensemble*. Ruskin, in his elaborate criticism upon this curious production, says:—"There may still be in Millais the power of repentance; but I cannot tell. For those who have never known the right way, its narrow wicket gate stands always on the latch; but for him who, having known it, has wandered thus insolently, the by-ways to the prison-house are shut, and the voices of recall are few. I have not patience much to examine into the meaning of the picture under consideration. If it has one, it should not have been disguised by the legend associated with it, which, by the way, does not exist in the romance from which it professes to be quoted, and is now pretty generally understood to be only a clever mystification by one of the artist's friends, written chiefly with the view of guarding the awkward horse against criticism. I am not sure whether the bitterest enemies of pre-Raphaelitism have yet accused it of expecting to cover its errors by describing them in bad English. Putting the legend, however, out of the question, the fancy of the picture is pretty—and might have been sublime, but that it is too ill-painted to be dwelt upon. The primal error in pictorial grammar, of painting figures in twilight as bright as yellow and vermillion can make them, while the towers and hills far above, and far more exposed to light, are yet dark and blue, could hardly have been redeemed by any subsequent harmonies of tone, much less by any random brilliancy; and the mistake of painting the water brighter than the sky which it reflects, though constant among inferior painters in subordinate parts of their work, is a singularly disgraceful one for a painter of standing. It does not matter whether we take it as a fact or a type; whether we look verily upon an old knight riding home in the summer twilight, with the dust of his weary day's journey on his golden armour, taking the woodman's children across the river with him, &c. &c.; or whether it may bear a deeper meaning than all this. It might be an image less of life than of the great Christian angel of death, who gives the eternal nobleness to small and great, and clasps the mean and mighty with his golden armour—Death bearing the two children with him across the calm river, whither they know not, one questioning the strange blue eyes which she sees fixed on heaven, the other only resting from his labour, and feeling no more his burden—all this, and more than this—had the idea but been realised with any steadiness of purpose or veracity of detail. As it stands, it can only be considered as a rough sketch of a great subject, injudiciously exposed to general criticism, and needing both modification in its arrangement and devoted labour in its future realisation." It is, however, lucky for the pre-Raphaelites that all are not of the same opinion, for Mr. Agnew, a *millionaire* patron of the fine arts, and a great admirer of the productions of this school, without even seeing the picture, despatched an order by electric telegraph from Manchester to purchase it (upon hearsay only) for a thousand guineas, before it had been exhibited to the public.

Mr. Millais has another painting in the present Exhibition of far greater pretensions. We mean "The Escape of the Heretic, 1559." This picture has elicited from Ruskin a criticism even more severe, and which proves that, however much he may love his friend, like Aristotle, "he loves truth more." "The conception of his second picture is an example," says Ruskin, "of the darkest error in judgment—the fatalest failure in the instinct of the painter's mind. At once coarse and ghastly in fancy, exaggerated and obscure in action, the work seems to have been wrought with the resolute purpose of confirming all that the bitterest adversaries of the school have delighted to allege against it; and whatever friendship has murmured, or enmity proclaimed, of its wilful preference of ugliness to beauty, is now sealed into everlasting acceptance. \* \* \* For Mr. Millais there is no hope but in a return to perfect quietness. A time is probably fixed in every man's career, when his own choice determines the relation of his endowments with his destiny; and the time has come when this

painter must choose, and choose finally, whether the eminence he cannot abdicate is to make him conspicuous in honour or in ruin." The piece is from the following historical account of the escape of a heretic from Valladolid :—"This Friday before Good Friday, A.D. 1584, before the licentiate Crestoval Rodriguez, Commissary of the Holy Inquisition, appears Fray (brother) Juan Romero, monk of the order of St. Dominic, in the Convent of the said order in this said city, familiar of the said Holy Inquisition; and having sworn to speak the truth, saith, 'That having assigned, together with Fray Diego Mũno, familiar of the said Holy Inquisition, as confessor to Maria Juana di Acũna y Villapos, late in close prison of the Holy Inquisition, convict as an obstinate heretic, and left to be delivered to the secular arm at the act of faith appointed to be held in this said city, before his most Catholic Majesty our Lord the King this day, he was yesterday at noon in the prison of the said prisoner, together with a person unknown, whom he supposed to be said Fray Diego, but saw not his face by reason of his wearing his hood drawn forward, when he was of a sudden set upon, gagged, and bound by the said person unknown, and his habit stripped off and put upon the said prisoner, who so passed out from the said prison with the said person unknown, nor hath since been discovered by the deponent or the other familiars of the said Holy Inquisition in the said city.'—From *Documentos Relativos a los Procesos par la Inquisicion de Valladolid*. "The Escape of the Heretic," as represented by the pre-Raphaelite painter from this description, reminds us forcibly of the story of the escape of Lord Nitadale from the Tower in the habiliments of his wife.

---

## SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

---



OSHUA REYNOLDS, the most popular portrait painter that this country has, perhaps, hitherto produced, was the son of the Rev. Samuel Reynolds and Th  ophile his wife. He was born on the 16th of July, 1723, at Plympton in Devonshire, three months before the death of his great predecessor, Sir Godfrey Kneller. His father, who was the head of the public school of Plympton, from which he derived an income scarcely adequate for the wants of a family consisting at one time of twelve children, gave to Joshua, who was the tenth in rotation, this singular Christian appellation in the hope that it might induce some wealthy individual of the same name to make him his heir.

From "Richardson's Treatise on Painting," Joshua, who early showed a greater predilection to make private drawings than public exercises in his father's school, drew his first rudiments of art. Reynolds p  re was a man of too much indolence or want of resolution to check effectually the idle habits of his son, who was, therefore, allowed to cultivate his taste for drawing at the expense of his classical improvement. "Jacob Catt's Book of Emblems," which his great-grandmother, by his father's side, had brought with her from Holland, furnished plenty of exercise for his genius for copying. The prints in "Plutarch's Lives," published by Dryden, also engaged his attention, but compared with the Emblems, he considered them rude and uncouth. Of his boyish productions no specimen is, we believe, now in existence; but that they were very promising is proved from the fact of his pursuing the bent of his own inclination, with the full approbation of his father, to the entire neglect of his classics and mathematics.

In the month of October, 1741, Joshua, already in the nineteenth year of his age, was sent to London by the advice of a neighbour of the name of Cranch, and placed under the care of Mr. Hudson, the most distinguished portrait painter of the day. He commenced his studies with his new master on the festival of St. Luke, the patron saint of painters; but Hudson, though he had gained some reputation as a manufacturer of portraits, had, in reality, little skill as an artist, and the knowledge which Reynolds acquired of drawing during the two years he continued in Hudson's employment was, on this account, very small. In 1743 he returned home, and for three years continued to work at





THE SCHOOLBOY. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.  
*Contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by the Earl of Warwick*

painting without any instruction save the light of his own genius. He afterwards regretted this loss of time, but remarked, that but for his quarrel with Hudson, he should never have escaped from tameness and insipidity—from fair tied wigs, blue velvet coats, and white satin waistcoats, which Hudson bestowed on all customers alike.

At the age of two-and-twenty Reynolds hired a house at the town of Plymouth Dock, and took his two youngest unmarried sisters to live with him. He here set up as a portrait painter, but the



REPRODUCED FROM A PAINTING BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

vision style in which he had been instructed by Hudson still characterised his productions, and on one occasion, when a gentleman wished to be distinguished from others by having his hat painted on his head, such was the power of conventionalism in Reynolds, that he is said to have painted one hat on the gentleman's head and another under his arm. But although educated in the school, he was not a slave to its absurdities; and, in a portrait of himself executed about this time, which represents him

with pencils and palette in his left hand, and shading the light from his eyes with his right, there is considerable freedom and merit.

In the year 1746, he lost his father, and Joshua, who was now twenty-three years of age, and celebrated in the county as a portrait painter of promise, longed for a more extended field for the development of his talents. He, therefore, paid a second visit to London, and established himself for a time in St. Martin's-lane, which was the favourite resort of the artists of the time. In the month of May, 1749, Captain Keppel, afterwards Lord Keppel, who had conceived a warm friendship for the young artist, set out as Commodore for the Mediterranean station with the object of protecting the British merchants from the insults of the Algerines, and invited Reynolds to accompany him. After touching at Lisbon, he visited Gibraltar, Algiers, and Minorca, where, through the influence of Keppel and General Blakeney, he was employed to paint the portraits of almost all the officers in the garrison at Port Mahon; in Minorca his face was so severely cut by a fall from his horse, that he carried a disfiguring scar with him to the grave. From Minorca he sailed to Leghorn, and immediately proceeded to Rome. The effect produced on his mind by the sight of the *chefs-d'œuvre* which had immortalised the masters who produced them, will be best understood by quoting his own remark. "I found myself," says he, "in the midst of works executed upon principles with which I was unacquainted: I felt my ignorance, and stood abashed. . . . It was necessary, as it is expressed on a very solemn occasion, that I should become *as a little child*." He stayed, however, at Rome until his judgment was matured, and he had learned to contemplate the productions of Raphael and Michael Angelo with an enthusiasm bordering on devotion. But although he employed his time at Rome in studying every variety of excellence and in acquiring a knowledge of effect with which he was soon to astonish his countrymen, there were in the productions of Angelo and Raphael a dignity and sublimity which, however much Reynolds might study and admire them, he could never hope to imitate. He did little in the way of original production while at Rome. There is, indeed, a noble portrait of himself painted during his stay in the Eternal City, and also a kind of parody on Raphael's "School of Athens," into which was introduced thirty likenesses of English students and travellers then resident at Rome. From Rome, Reynolds went to Bologna and Genoa, but the records he has left of his stay in these Italian towns have been of little value to artistic students. From Genoa he travelled to Parma, and thence to Florence, where he remained about two months, observing much but writing little. He next visited Venice, where he added considerably to his previous knowledge of the combination of colours. But while he was studying the old masters in the City of the Adriatic, he happened one night to hear a popular English air sung by an opera company, and the effect upon his imagination was so great, that he actually shed tears, and at once determined on returning to England.

He arrived in London some time in October, 1752, and, after a short visit to his native county, established himself as a professional artist in St. Martin's-lane, London. The freedom of his style and the brilliancy of his colouring excited at first the most violent opposition among the old-fashioned portrait painters of the time, and he thus speaks of the artists with whom he had to contend at the commencement of his career:—"They have got a set of pictures which they apply to all persons indiscriminately; the consequence of which is that all their pictures look like so many sign-post paintings, and if they have a history or a family piece to paint, the first thing they do is to look over their commonplace-book, containing sketches which they have stolen from various pictures; then they search their prints over, and pilfer one figure from one print, and another from a second, but never take the trouble of thinking for themselves."

Genius, however, must in the end prevail over routine, and although he had much prejudice and more jealousy to contend with, he at length succeeded in displacing the sign-post productions of his *soi-disant* orthodox rivals. "The force and felicity of his portraits," says Northcote, "not only drew around him the opulence and beauty of the nation, but happily gained him the merited honour of perpetuating the features of all the eminent and distinguished men of learning then living.

In 1754 he had the good fortune to become acquainted with Samuel Johnson, whose lasting friendship he afterwards secured. They were, however, a complete contrast in everything, and were only united in friendship by the electric power of genius. Johnson, rough and saturnine, had little else in common with Reynolds, who was soft, graceful, and flexible. The price which he at first received for a head was only five guineas; the rate, however, increased with his fame, and in the year

1755 his charge was twelve. His reputation and popularity soon enabled him to advance considerably upon this sum, and in the year 1758, which was perhaps the most lucrative of his professional career, we find him casually remarking that idle loungers, of whom he had a great and legitimate horror, did not consider that *his* time was worth five guineas an hour. From this calculation we may gather that it was his practice to paint a portrait in four hours, for we do not find that he had as yet raised his price beyond twenty guineas a head. In the year 1760 a scheme was carried into execution, of which we see the full-blown results in the yearly exhibition of the British artists. Johnson thus alludes to this undertaking in a letter to Barette:—"The artists have established a yearly exhibition of pictures and statues, in imitation, I am told, of foreign academies. This year was the second exhibition. They please themselves much with the multitude of spectators, and imagine that the English school will rise in reputation. Reynolds is without a rival, and continues to add thousands to thousands, which he deserves, among other excellencies, by retaining his kindness for Barette. This exhibition has filled the heads of the artists and of the lovers of art. Surely life, if it be not long, is tedious, since we are forced to call in the assistance of so many trifles to rid us of our time—of that time which can never return." The doctor, however, notwithstanding the sarcastic terms in which he glances at the exhibition, condescended to write an introduction to the catalogue, in which a feature, thoroughly Johnsonian in its diapason, occurs. "The purpose of this exhibition is not to enrich the artist, but to advance the art. The eminent are not flattered with preference, nor the obscure insulted with contempt; whoever hopes to deserve public favour is here invited to display his merit."

In 1761, Reynolds,

"Whose chariot rolled on Fortune's wheel,"

purchased a fine house in Leicester-square, furnished it with much taste, and added a splendid gallery for the exhibition of his pictures. The most curious addition, however, which he made to the arrangements of his domestic economy consisted in a carriage, of which the wheels were carved and gilt, and which bore on its panels illustrations of the four seasons of the year. About this time he painted his celebrated picture of "Garrick, between Tragedy and Comedy." The execution is deserving of all praise, but the conception is absurd. Shadow and substance cannot enter into conversation: the real and the imaginary can have no actual communion.

In the year 1768, the Royal Academy, such as it now exists, was planned and proposed by Chambers, West, Coles, and Moser; Reynolds keeping aloof, either from timidity or caution. West, however, called on Reynolds, and after a conference of two hours' continuance, succeeded in persuading him to join the thirty members of which it consisted. Accompanied by West, he entered the room where his brother artists were assembled. They rose up, to a man, and saluted him as President. He was much affected by this compliment from his professional brethren, but he declined to accept the honour until he had consulted with Johnson and Burke. These eminent friends advised him to yield, and he then consented. The engraving, taken from a painting by himself, contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by the Royal Academy, represents Sir Joshua in his robes as President of the Royal Academy.

#### "PORTRAIT OF SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, P. R. A."

In stature Sir Joshua Reynolds was rather below the middle size; his complexion was florid, his features round and blunt, his aspect lively and intelligent, and his manners calm, simple, and unassuming. His habits were active: application could not tire him, nor constant labour subdue him. He is represented by some as sordid and saving, and by others as generous, open-hearted, and humane. One of his servants, who survived him many years, described his late master as "prudent in the matter of pins—a saver of bits of thread—a man hard and parsimonious, who never thought he had enough of labour out of his dependants, and always suspected that he overpaid them." Servants and friends, no doubt, spoke of him according to their own experience of the man. Poverty in early life had given him habits of economy, and he continued the same system of saving when he was master of sixty thousand pounds as when he owned but sixpence.

#### "THE SCHOOLBOY."

The painting from which this engraving is copied is contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by the Earl of Warwick. It is in Sir Joshua Reynold's best style, and is exactly the subject upon

which he delighted to exercise his genius. His historical paintings have little of the heroic dig which an inspired mind breathes into compositions of that class. His imagination often fails and he attempts to hide his want of wings in the unrivalled splendour of his colouring, and by thick-strewn graces of his execution. But his single poetic figures are remarkable for their unaff ease, their elegant simplicity, and the brilliancy of their colouring. Some scores of these subject dashed off in the course of his life, and though they are chiefly portraits, they bear all the charm o



PORTRAIT OF JOHN HUNTER. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

most successful imaginative conceptions. "The Schoolboy" is one of the happiest of his si creations. Of children, indeed, he seems to have been remarkably fond ; nor can one doubt, from reality with which he invests these poetic conceptions, that he has rejoiced with them over their finery, mourned with them over the difficulty of their task, and romped or ridden with them o parlour broom. He was, we grieve to think, a worshipper of rank, and his children are all the s of families of distinction ; but although we cannot but acknowledge that such a littleness was a st on a man of his merit, we must do homage to the genius which has gladdened us with the sight much innocence and beauty.

#### "UGOLINO."

This engraving is from a picture painted by Sir Joshua in 1773. The subject is taken from *Inferno* of the "Divina Commedia" of Dante, and was suggested to Reynolds by Goldsmith.



THE NATIVITY. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

merit lies chiefly in the execution, for the conception of the artist scarcely answers Dante's inspired description. Reynolds has represented the lofty and stern sufferer of the Italian poet rather as a famishing beggar than as a creature that looked, like Satan, "little less than archangel ruined." He appears totally deficient in any intellectual superiority, and heartlessly regardless of his dying children,

who cluster around his knees. Nevertheless the artist has described with so much skill and faithfulness this awful tragedy, that Captain Cook's Omiah imagined what he saw was a real scene of distress, and ran to support the suffering child. The Duke of Dorset paid four hundred guineas for "Ugolino," which was considered, some eighty years ago, a large sum to give for the production of a living artist.

#### "PORTRAIT OF JOHN HUNTER."

The portraits of Reynolds are equally numerous and excellent, and those connoisseurs who have criticised their merits, have swelled the number of his votaries by comparing them with the simplicity of Titian, the vigour of Rembrandt, and the elegance and delicacy of Vandyke. In character, complexion, and manly ease, the painting from which our engraving is copied has never been surpassed. The boldness of the posture and the singular freedom of the colouring, are so supported by all the grace of art, and by all the sorcery of skill, that they appear natural and noble. Reynolds possessed, indeed, that peculiar art, in which Lawrence was also an adept, of preserving the resemblance to the original and of yet making his men all nobleness, his women all loveliness, and his children all simplicity. Over the meanest head he could throw a halo of dignity, and had the singular art of summoning the mind into the face and making sentiment mingle in the portrait.

Portrait painting is, in our own estimation, inferior to historical compositions; but in the mind of many they rank on an equality: and there can be no doubt that portraits which represent the form and soul of poets, statesmen, and warriors, and of all whose actions or whose thoughts lend lustre to the land, are to be received as illustrations of history. But with the generality of portraits form and history have nothing to do. The face of an undistinguished individual, however beautifully painted, is of no value in the eyes of posterity. The portrait of Johnson has risen to the value of five hundred guineas, while that of many of Sir Joshua's grandest lords and ladies would scarcely fetch the original fifty. Among those which the present and all future ages will value on account of the merits of the individual, is that of John Hunter, from which our engraving is taken.

The Royal Academy, of which we have just recorded the origin and purpose, was honoured in its infancy by having Samuel Johnson for its Professor of Ancient Literature, and Goldsmith for its Professor of Ancient History. Both these offices are purely honorary; but ennobled as they have been by the fame of the great men who have filled them, they are the objects of much competition. Hallam and Macaulay now occupy the professorial chairs of Johnson and Goldsmith. The King, who did not hold with his grandfather, that "*Bainters* were no goot," added dignity to the institution of the Royal Academy by bestowing on the President the honour of knighthood, and Reynolds, now Sir Joshua, received the congratulations of his friends upon the distinction he had so well merited. Burke, in one of his letters to Barry, says, "Reynolds is at the head of this Academy. From his known public spirit, and warm desire of raising up art among us, he will, I have no doubt, contrive this institution to be productive of all the advantages that could possibly be derived from it; and whilst it is in such hands as his, we shall have nothing to fear from those shallows and quicksands upon which the Italian and French Academies have lost themselves." Reynolds, who had no intention of making the office, for which he was so well suited, a sinecure, imposed upon himself the task of writing and delivering discourses for the instruction of students in the principles and practice of their art. Of these discourses he composed fifteen, which he delivered during the long course of his presidency. They are all remarkable for clearness of conception and variety of information. He was, however, no orator, and his mode of delivery was so defective, that a nobleman, who was present at his first lecture, said, "Sir Joshua, you read your discourse in a tone so low, that I scarce heard a word you said." "That was to my advantage," replied the President, with a smile.

The following extract from a letter to Barry, written by Sir Joshua at the request of Burke, will give our readers some notion of the style of his lectures. "Whoever," writes Sir Joshua, "is resolved to excel in painting, or, indeed, in any other art, must bring all his mind to bear upon that one object, from the moment that he rises till he goes to bed. The effect of every object that meets a painter's eye may give him a lesson, provided his mind is calm, unembarrassed with other objects, and open to instruction. This general attention, with other studies connected with the art, which must employ the artist in his closet, will be found sufficient to fill up life, if it were much longer than it is. Were

I in your place, I would consider myself as playing a great game, and never suffer the little malice and envy of my rivals to draw off my attention from the main object, which if you pursue with a steady eye, it will not be in the power of all the cicerones in the world to hurt you. Whilst they are endeavouring to prevent the gentlemen from employing the young artists, instead of injuring them, they are, in my opinion, doing them the greatest service. Whoever has great views, I would recommend to him, whilst at Rome, rather to live on bread and water than lose advantages which he can never hope to enjoy a second time, and which he will find only in the Vatican, where I will engage no cavalier sends his students to copy for him. The *Capella Sistina* is the production of the greatest genius that was ever employed in the arts: it is worth considering by what principles that stupendous greatness of style is produced; and endeavouring to produce something of your own, on those principles, will be a more advantageous method of studying than copying the 'St. Cecilia' in the Borghese, or the 'Herodias' of Guido, which may be copied to eternity, without contributing a jot towards making a man a more able painter. If you neglect visiting the Vatican often, and particularly the *Capella Sistina*, you will neglect receiving that peculiar advantage which Rome can give above all other cities in the world. In other places you will find casts from the antique, and capital pictures of the great painters; but it is there only that you can form an idea of the dignity of the art as it is—there only that you can see the works of Michael Angelo and Raphael."

However parsimonious Reynolds may have been by nature, and from early necessity, he was certainly a man of convivial habits; and his company, which was composed of some of the greatest wits and *savans* of the day, was always most hospitably received at his table. On one occasion Johnson, Burke, Garrick, Douglas, and Goldsmith were his guests; and the idea of composing a set of extempore epitaphs on one another was started. Goldsmith's lines show how much the painter was appreciated by the poet:—

"Here Reynolds is laid, and, to tell you my mind,  
He has not left a wiser or better behind;  
His pencil was striking, resistless, and grand;  
His manners were gentle, complying, and bland;  
Still born to improve us in every part,  
His pencil our faces, his manners our heart."

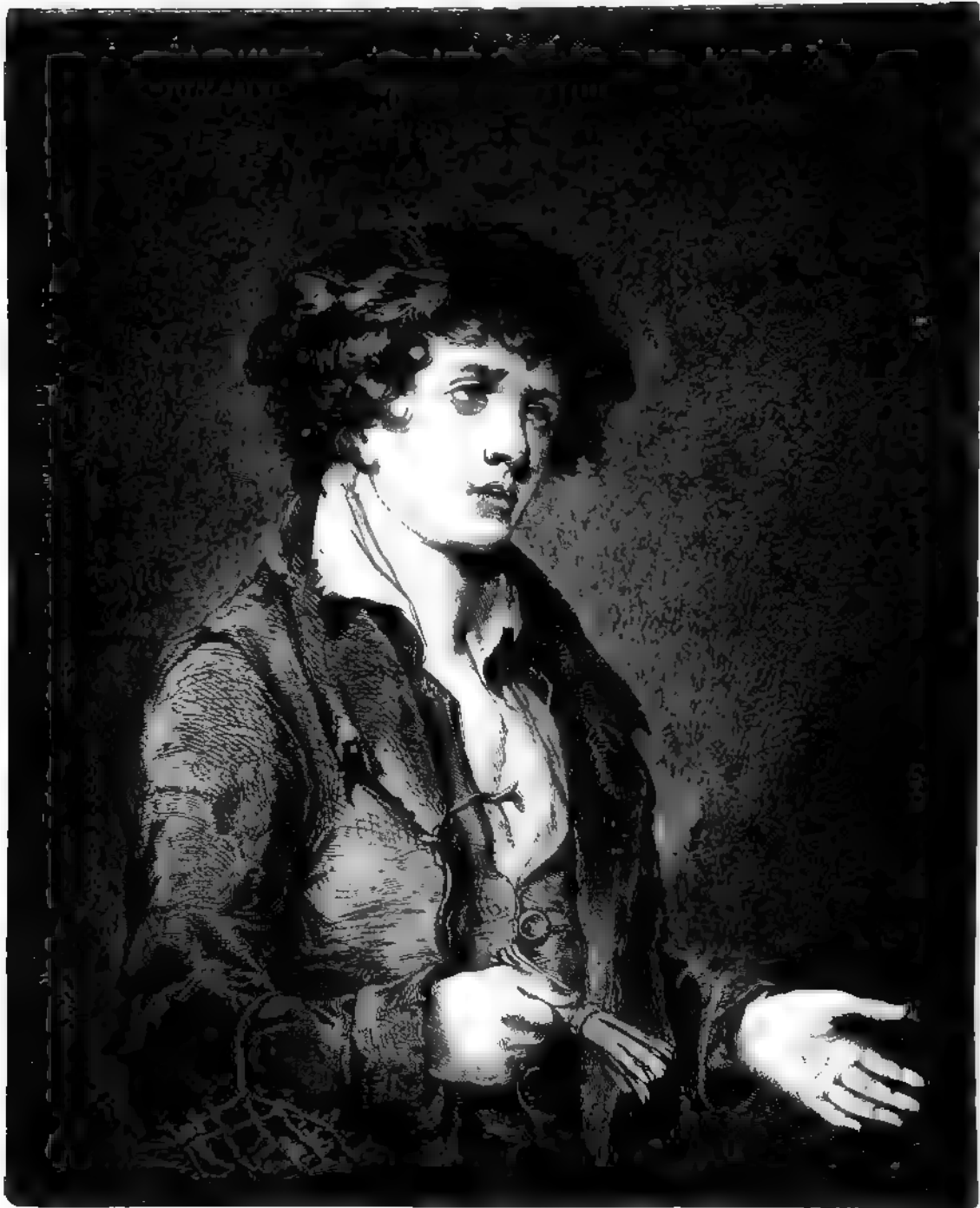
That the public endorsed the sentiments contained in this flattering eulogium of Goldsmith, is proved by the fact, that almost all the men in the three kingdoms, who were distinguished in literature, in art, at the bar, in the senate, or in the field, might occasionally be found feasting at his social and well-furnished table. But how great soever may have been the eloquence and refinement of his manners, we cannot apply the same epithets to the arrangement of his establishment. Courteney tells us that his dinners were remarkable for "a coarse, inelegant plenty, without any regard to order or arrangement. A table prepared for seven or eight was often compelled to accommodate fifteen or sixteen. When this difficulty was got over, a deficiency of knives and forks, plates and glasses, succeeded. \* \* \* The wine, cookery, and dishes were but little attended to; nor was the fish or venison ever talked of, or recommended. Amidst this convivial, animated bustle among his guests, our host sat perfectly composed, always attentive to what was said, never minding what was eat or drunk, but left every one at perfect liberty to scramble for himself. Temporal and spiritual peers, physicians, lawyers, actors, and musicians, composed the motley group, and played their parts without dissonance or discord. At five o'clock precisely dinner was served, whether all the invited guests were arrived or not. Sir Joshua was never so fashionably ill-bred as to wait an hour perhaps for two or three persons of rank or title, and put the rest of the company out of humour by this invidious distinction."

About the year 1772, Reynolds was in such request, that he raised the price of his portraits to thirty-five guineas; and had, notwithstanding, many more customers than he could accommodate.

In the July of 1773, the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law was conferred upon him by the University of Oxford; and about the same time he was elected a member of the Royal, the Antiquarian, and the Dilettanti Societies. At the close of the same summer he visited his native town, and was chosen Mayor of Plympton,—a distinction which he valued so much, that he declared to the King "that he preferred it to all the honours which had been heaped upon him, excepting that which your Majesty so graciously conferred on me—the honour of knighthood."

Goldsmith died in 1774, and was sincerely regretted by Reynolds, whose grief prevented him





THE BEGGAR BOY. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

from touching a pencil for a whole day after the poet's death. He contributed largely to the expense of the marble monument raised to the memory of Goldsmith, in Poet's-corner, Westminster. The inscription on the tomb is the composition of Johnson. The doctor, when questioned by Boswell on

merit of Reynolds's portraits, replied in his customary caustic style, "Sir, their chief excellence is g like ; I would have them in the dress of their times, to preserve the accuracy of history : truth, is of the greatest value in these things."

"THE NATIVITY."

We said that Sir Joshua, as an historical painter, never acquired any great eminence. He is often stive where we might have expected him to show the highest excellence. His faces are formal and , and the picture seems a kind of hotch-potch made up of borrowed fragments, which he had been



THE SNAKE IN THE GRASS. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

do to work up into an entire and consistent whole. The painting of "The Nativity," from which engraving is copied, was, nevertheless, a work of great study, and by far the most elaborate picture in style which Reynolds ever executed. His own conception of the subject is elevated and ennobled by the halo of celestial light which emanates from the infant Christ. This idea he borrowed from "The Night" of Corregio.

"The Nativity" comprised in its composition thirteen figures, and was in its dimensions twelve by eighteen. It was designed to surmount the seven allegories. It was, however, cold, laboured, uninspired. We speak of it in the past tense, because after it became the property of a late Duke

of Rutland, who gave 1,200 guineas for it, it was burnt, with many other paintings of inestimable value, at Belvoir Castle.

#### "THE BEGGAR BOY."

This is another of those single poetic figures in which Reynolds's *forte* lay. Like "The Schoolboy," it is evidently a portrait, and is in conception and execution one of the artist's most happy productions. There is a languor about the face which tells of pain, poverty, and privation, and a canting, hypocritical expression in the features which practice has made habitual. The bundle of matches which he offers for sale are of a size and form which are now only traditionary among us, for the use of lucifers is so universal that there is no household in England or elsewhere in which they have not replaced the flint and steel and the brimstone match, which was only ignited after so much puffing and blowing. The supplication in the attitude of the hands is peculiarly expressive, and, although the genius of the painter has invested the figure with more poetical interest than beggar boys generally inspire, there is a reality about the whole piece which cannot fail to arrest the attention of the spectator. He was a close observer of nature, and drew his excellencies from various sources. He never despised the opinion of any one. From the most unlettered minds he sometimes obtained valuable hints, and babes and sucklings were among his instructors. We are told that a beggar's infant was on one occasion his model for some picture. Overpowered by continuing so long in one posture it fell asleep and presented the image of one of the babes in the piece he was producing. No sooner had he sketched it on the canvas than the child turned in its sleep and presented the idea of the other babe, which he instantly sketched, and from these two sketches afterwards made the finished picture. It was one of his maxims that the gestures of children, being all dictated by nature, are graceful, and that affectation and distortion come in with the dancing-master. "He watched the motion of the children," says his biographer, "who came to his gallery, and was pleased when he saw them forget themselves, and mimic unconsciously the airs and attitudes of the portraits on the wall."

#### "SNAKE IN THE GRASS."

"The Snake in the Grass" is one of those poetic conceptions in which Reynolds was so eminently successful. The recumbent figure is a model of feminine loveliness, and is, no doubt, though unacknowledged for obvious reasons, the portrait of Miss Vernon, Lady Caroline Montague, or some lovely scion of the Bedford family. It is not a Venus of the pure classic school, such as Titian has bequeathed to us, or Rubens has imitated from Titian, but a goddess of love of modern growth, without any pretension to classical origin, or any relation to those conceptions of ideal beauty which the old masters derived from Greece and Olympus. The attitude is easy, graceful, and pleasing. The figure is feminine and attractive, without partaking in any degree of the voluptuous and meretricious character of the divinities of Titian and Rubens. There is indeed an air of innocence and purity about it which gives an applicability to the poet's lines:—

*"'Tis said that a lion will turn and flee  
From a maid in the pride of her purity."*

And even the presence of the little winged god gazing in her face with that expression of wanton mischief so characteristic of the Cupid of the ancient masters, does not impregnate with even a breath of sensuality the modest atmosphere of the picture. It is to be regretted that in some of his most valuable and highly finished productions, Reynolds should have employed so much lake and carmine, colours liable to speedy deterioration. We are informed that he was well aware of the perishable nature of these pigments, and that he used them although he well knew that they could not long endure. If so, he made experiments in art at the expense of individuals who purchased works which, at the time they came into their possession, were glossy and gaudy in their colours, but which, like flowers in the field, were destined to fade after gladdening the sight only for a season. Sir Joshua was at length convinced of the danger of using these colours, but not until symptoms of decay had appeared in many of his most popular masterpieces. On the subject of these experiments in colouring, which posterity has so much reason to deplore, he remarks with considerable *nonchalance*, "I was always willing to believe that my uncertainty of proceeding in my works—that is, my never being

sure of my hand, and my frequent alterations—arose from a refined taste, which could not acquiesce in anything short of a high degree of excellence. I had not an opportunity of being early initiated in the principles of colouring; no man indeed could teach me. If I have never settled with respect to colouring, let it at the same time be remarked that my unsteadiness in this respect proceeded from an inordinate desire to possess every kind of excellence that I saw in the works of others, without considering that there are in colouring, as in style, excellencies which are incompatible with each other. We all know how often those masters who sought after colouring changed their manner, while others, merely from not seeing various modes, acquiesced all their lives in that with which they set out. On the contrary, I tried every effect of colour, and by leaving out every colour in its turn, showed each colour that I could do without it. As I alternately left out every colour, I tried every new colour, and often, as is well known, failed. I was influenced by no idle or foolish affectation: my fickleness in the mode of colouring arose from an eager desire to attain the highest excellence. This is the only merit I can assume to myself from my conduct." But whatever experiments he may himself have made in colouring (and unfortunately some of his most elaborate productions prove how great a failure they were), he never allowed any of his pupils a similar license. "That boy will never do good, with his gallipots of varnish and foolish mixtures," said he, speaking of some pupil who had been experimentalising in colours. But he never revealed, either to his pupils in private or to the public in his lectures, the secrets of his colouring. Such concealment in a man who, like Reynolds, chose to take upon himself the double office of public and private instructor of students in painting, was inexcusable. He ought not surely to have retained to himself a secret in the art which he seems to have considered of so much value.

#### "THE HOLY FAMILY."

In the composition of this picture, Reynolds challenged competition with the great masters of the Italian school. Religious subjects, as we remarked on a former occasion, were not those in which Reynolds excelled, but as he had made of Michael Angelo and Raphael objects of professional adoration, we must not be surprised that he endeavoured to imitate their style. He had, however, no revelations of heavenly things, such as inspired Raphael. The visions which presented themselves were unembodied or dim, and flitted before his sight like the airy progeny of Banquo. Could Virgin Marys, infant Redeemers, ministering angels, and the souls of just men made perfect, have sat for their portraits, who could have painted them so truthfully or so divinely as Reynolds. "He never lived a day," says his biographer, without thinking of Michael Angelo, Raphael, or Correggio; he certainly never wrote a professional memorandum without introducing their works or their names. But, with these masters and "the grand style" constantly on his lips, he dedicated his own pencil to works of a character into which little of the lofty and nothing of the divine could well be introduced. When he endeavoured to imitate, his success was at best problematical.

In 1777, Reynolds, who was now inoculated with the ambition of authorship, delivered seven discourses on art, which he collected into a volume. He was anxious about the popularity of his work, and, in order to give it an additional claim to the favour of the public, he dedicated his labours to the King, in a preface so elegant in style and so replete with classical allusion, that it is quite clear some more practised pen than his own must have assisted him in its composition. Probably the Colossus of literature, whose portrait Sir Joshua was now painting for the second time, at the request of Mrs. Thrale, was the author or the polisher of the dedication.

We have no authentic account of the success of the publication.

At fifty-four years of age, Reynolds, who had amassed a fortune and achieved a reputation which no English portrait painter had ever equalled, was still so enamoured of his art that he laboured at it with the same unremitting assiduity which characterised his years of obscurity and privation. So popular was he that he was able, without diminishing the number of his customers, to raise his price for a head from thirty-five to fifty guineas. He was, however, no longer in the prime of life, and the warnings which wait upon advancing years came thick and fast upon him. Goldsmith was gone; the curtain had fallen for ever upon Garrick; and Johnson gave evident signs of old age and decay. Reynolds, who was a frugal liver and regular in his habits, was, notwithstanding the laborious life he

led, still strong and healthy, and a proof in his own person that even sedentary habits and constant labour are less injurious in their tendency than riot and dissipation.

The thought of retiring from the profession of which he was so much enamoured never once occurred to him. He felt more pleasure in painting than in any recreation or amusement the world could supply; and he also felt that much of that social distinction which was so dear to his aristocratic nature would be lost to him, if he ceased to minister, through his art, to the vanity and pleasure of the rich and the powerful. In the year 1780, the Royal Academy was removed to Somerset House, where it was destined to remain for more than half a century. Sir Joshua elaborated a device for the ceiling of the library, but he was not happy in his conception. He represented Theory, personified, sitting on a cloud. But, as the figure is dark and mystical, and does not explain its own meaning, posterity looks



THE HOLY FAMILY. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

upon the design as a complete failure. During the course of this year he commenced a series of allegorical figures for the window of New College Chapel, at Oxford. They are in all seven personifications—Faith, Hope, Charity, Temperance, Fortitude, Justice, and Prudence. The subjects were not of a kind to inspire the painter, and we therefore find that they are a cold and unnatural progeny. The colouring is splendid; but they want that life and reality with which Reynolds invariably managed to invest the likeness of a titled sitter. Four years after the removal of the exhibition of the Royal Academy, the artist, while apparently in the enjoyment of unimpaired health and vigour, was attacked by a paralytic affection. The consternation which the intelligence of his danger occasioned among all classes of society may be judged from the letter which Johnson addressed to him on the subject. "I heard yesterday," says he, "of your late disorder, and should think ill of myself if I heard it without alarm. I heard likewise of your recovery, which I wish to be complete and permanent.

Your country has been in danger of losing one of its brightest ornaments, and I of losing one of my oldest and kindest friends; but I hope you will still live long for the honour of the nation, and that more enjoyment of your elegance, your intelligence, and your benevolence is still reserved for, dear Sir, your affectionate—SAM. JOHNSON."

Reynolds recovered from this paralytic attack, and produced many of his finest masterpieces after he had reached the ripe age of fifty-eight. Unrivalled as he was in genius and reputation, he was often subject to those crosses and vexations, from which neither fame nor fortune can shield us.

Barry, who had been appointed professor of painting, had been remiss in the performance of the duties of his office, which he held upon the condition of delivering a certain number of lectures in a stipulated time. Reynolds, as president of the Academy, felt it his province to take him to task, upon



THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH.

which Barry, who was a fiery little man, lost his temper, and said to Reynolds, "If I had only, in composing my lectures, to produce such poor, mistaken stuff as your discourses, I should have my work done, and be ready to read." Reynolds treated this attack with the contempt it merited, and made no reply.

Although he was generally humorous and tolerant, he could occasionally be caustic and severe. An inexperienced tyro in the art of portrait painting one day submitted for his inspection a specimen of her skill. "A portrait!" said he; "you should not show such things! What's that upon her head? A dish-clout!" The criticism was cruel; and, as the young artist was a lady, both ungallant and ungentlemanly.

In 1784 Reynolds succeeded to the office of King's painter, vacant by the death of Allan Ramsay. This year he produced his "Fortune-teller," his portrait of Miss Kemble, and his Mrs. Siddons as "the Tragic Muse." These are some of his noblest compositions. But the pleasure he derived from the increase of fame which his masterpieces brought him, was more than balanced by his grief for the loss of his great friend and ally, Dr. Samuel Johnson, who died in 1784. "I have three requests to make

to you," said Johnson to Reynolds, a day before his death, "and I beg you will attend to them, Sir Joshua: forgive me thirty pounds which I borrowed from you, read the Scriptures, and abstain from using your pencil on the Sabbath day." Reynolds promised, and remembered his promise when his friend was no more.

He sat to Gainsborough for his portrait, but before it was finished he was taken ill, and ordered by his physicians to go to Bath. When he had recovered, he apprised Gainsborough of his return, but his rival took no notice of the intimation. In the year 1789 he had reached the sixty-fourth year of his age—still active as ever in prosecuting his profession; and in execution and colouring more perfect and effective than when he was at his prime. One morning, however, in the month of July, while finishing the portrait of the Marchioness of Hertford, the sight of his left eye suffered a sudden eclipse. In mute despair he laid down his pencil, and never lifted it again. The entire loss of his eye, a calamity which afflicted him a few days after this preliminary attack, was a sore trial to him. Society became distasteful; and, as a refuge from the painful memory of his affliction, he occupied his time in taming a bird. One summer's morning it flew away; and Reynolds roamed for hours about the square in which he resided in the hope of reclaiming it.

The last time that Reynolds made his appearance in the Academy, a catastrophe occurred, which threatened him, and all those assembled there, with instant annihilation. A beam in the floor gave way, with a loud crash. The audience rushed to the sides of the room, stumbling one over the other, while Sir Joshua sat silent and unmoved in his chair. The floor sank but a few inches, the company resumed their seats, and he recommenced his discourse with the most unruffled composure.

A long-concealed and fatal malady was, however, attacking the citadel of life, and sapping his spirits. His liver, which had expanded to twice its natural dimensions, could not be reduced by any of the appliances of art, and he lost all his wonted cheerfulness. His friends endeavoured to comfort him with hopes of recovery; but he knew that his hour was come. "I have been fortunate," he said, "in having good health and constant success, and I ought not to complain. I know that all things on earth must have an end, and now I am come to mine." He expired, without any visible symptoms of pain, on the 23rd of February, 1792, in the sixty-ninth year of his age.

"His illness," says Burke, "was long, but borne with a mild and cheerful fortitude, without the least mixture of anything irritable or querulous, agreeably to the placid and even tenor of his whole life." He had, from the beginning of his malady, a distinct view of his dissolution; and he contemplated it with that entire composure which nothing but the innocence, integrity, and usefulness of his life, and an unaffected submission to the will of Providence, could bestow.

One of the crypts of St. Paul's Cathedral contain the ashes of this celebrated artist, who was accompanied to the grave by many of the most illustrious men of the time. He sleeps by the side Sir Christopher Wren, architect of the stately pile; and a statue to his memory, by Flaxman, has since been placed in the body of the cathedral.

We have already discussed the merits of his productions in our notices of the engravings copied from paintings which have been contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition at Manchester, or which are deposited in the galleries of our nobility and gentry.

The discourses, which were delivered when the annual distribution of medals took place among most promising students of the Royal Academy, were generally well calculated to produce the effect intended. He always endeavoured in them to excite the enthusiasm of his hearers, by dilating upon dignity and importance of the art of painting. They inculcated the necessity of constant labour and study; but their great defect was, that they proposed for objects of imitation the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the masters whose style but little corresponded with the English taste. "Study," exclaimed Reynolds to his students, *passim*, throughout his discourses—"study the works of the great masters for ever. Study them attentively, but always with those masters in your company. Consider them as models which you are to imitate, and, at the same time, as rivals which you are to combat." And yet he must have been well aware, while thus lecturing the rising generation of painters, that he was urging them to seek fortune and fame in a pursuit in which neither could be obtained, and concealing from them secret through which he had realised wealth and reputation.

There was a want of sincerity in all this, which was a stain upon the otherwise fair fame of the greatest portrait painter this country has ever produced.

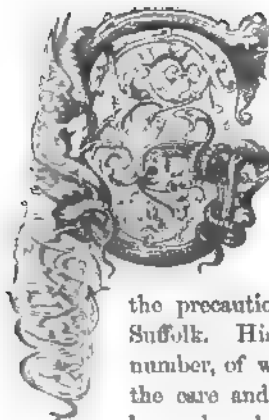
Of historical and poetic subjects, he painted upwards of one hundred and thirty. Of public characters, he painted the portraits of some four-and-twenty, upon whose merits posterity has set its stamp; and of ladies he painted many whose fame for beauty and talent his genius has perpetuated.

In conclusion, his great eulogist, Burke, says of him, that he was, on many accounts, one of the most memorable men of his time. "He was the first Englishman who added the praise of the elegant arts to the other glories of his country. In taste, in grace, in facility, in happy invention, and in the richness and harmony of colouring, he was equal to the greatest masters of the renowned ages. In portrait he went beyond them; for he communicated to that description of the art in which English artists are most engaged, a variety, a fancy, and a dignity, derived from the higher branches, which even those who professed them in a superior manner did not always preserve when they delineated individual nature. His portraits remind the spectator of the invention and amenity of landscape. In painting portraits, he appeared not to be raised upon that platform, but to descend upon it from a higher sphere." Such was Reynolds as an artist; and though he may have had laid to his charge some littlenesses inseparable from the habits he contracted in early life, and some prejudices, which created striking discrepancies between his precepts and his practice,

"He was a man, who, take him for all in all,  
We shall not look upon his like again."

And therefore we say "*Requiescat in pace.*"

## THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH.



AINSBOROUGH, with whose immortal productions we will continue our illustrations of the works contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition, was born in the year 1727, at Sudbury, in Suffolk. His father was a clothier by trade, and a dissenter in religion. He was a man of peculiar habits—mysterious in his intercourse with his friends, and suspected, for some purpose never revealed, of carrying a dagger and pistols under his clothes. In the times when our highways were all infested by banditti, when rebellion at home, and invasion from abroad, were catastrophes daily expected, we cannot ourselves see anything very extraordinary in Mr. Gainsborough, senior, using

the precautions which created so much suspicion among the pastoral and timid rustics of Suffolk. His mother was a sensible woman, and proud of her sons—altogether three in number, of whom Thomas, the subject of our present memoir, was the youngest. Through the care and expense bestowed by their mother upon their early education, young Gainsborough and his brothers were superior to most of the youths of their own age in the town

in talents and acquirements. It is indeed to their mothers that the men who have made a conspicuous figure in life generally attribute the origin of their success. A clever father is often the sire of a stupid and profligate progeny; but a wise and intelligent mother will generally have sons who are the heirs of her intellectual superiority, and whose future success is, in nine cases out of ten, the result of their maternal training.

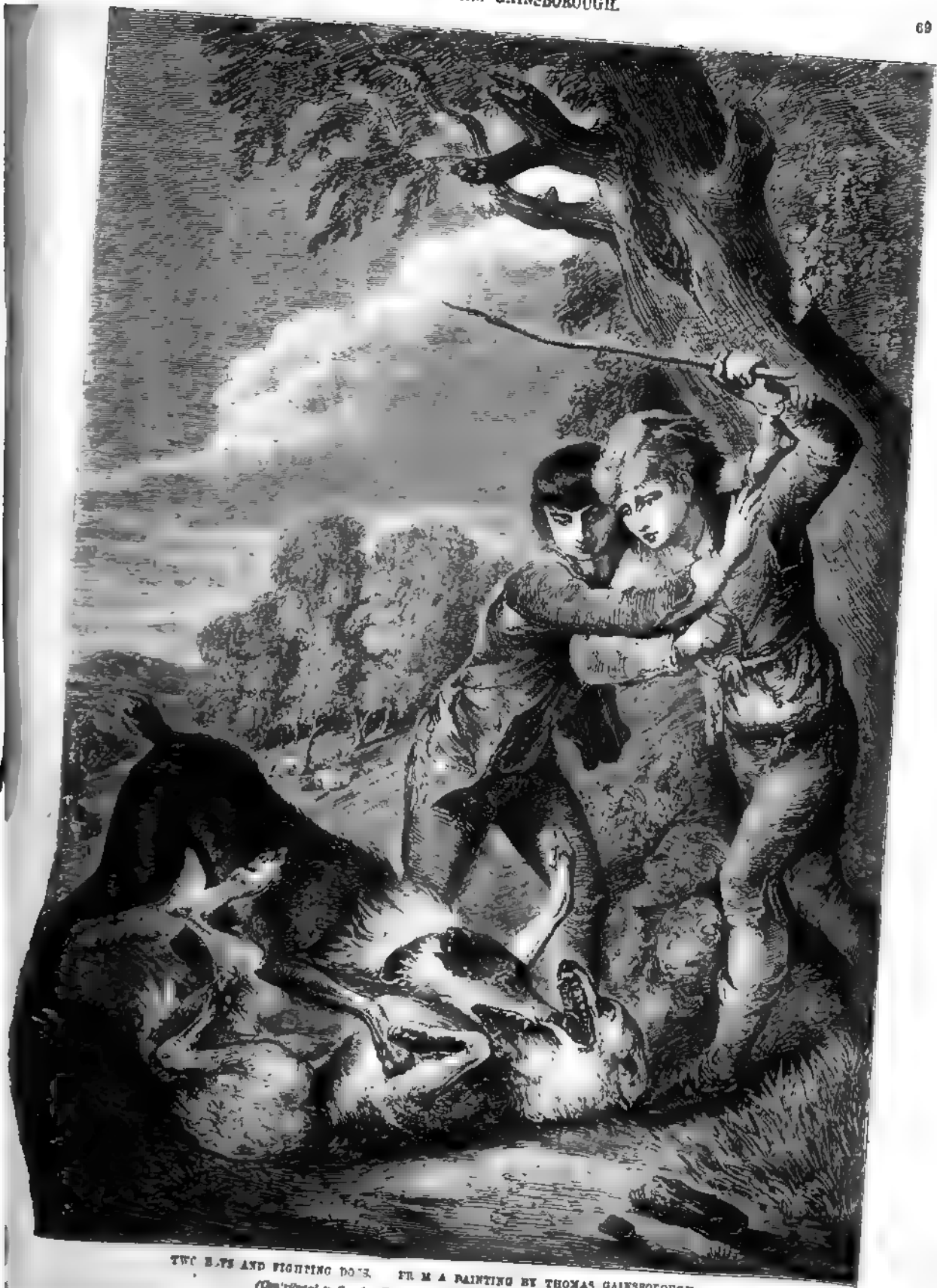
Thomas Gainsborough gave early indications of a taste for fine art. While yet a child he loved to wander through winding glades and under ancient trees, when he would fill his school copy-books with pencillings of flowers or shrubs, or any other objects which attracted his notice. The sketches in his copy-book were prophetic of the style of his maturer productions. We are informed that at ten years of age he had made great progress in drawing, and that at twelve he was a confirmed painter. Book-learning, of course, suffered in the ratio of his progress in fine art, and we accordingly find that, although in his letters he was able to express himself in clear and forcible language, he was by no





THE BLUE BOY. FROM A PAINTING BY THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH.  
(Contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by the Marquis of Westminster.)

means equal in scholarship to what his brothers had been at his age. An anecdote is related of him about this time which does not tell much to his credit. His request for a holiday had been refused by his schoolmaster, and as he was determined not to be disappointed in his intended sketching excursion,



TWO BOYS AND FIGHTING DOGS. FROM A PAINTING BY THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH.  
(Contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by J. T. Clark, Esq.)

he counterfeited his father's hand, and sent the usual missive of "Give Tom a holiday" to the pedagogue. The forgery was detected, and his father, when the circumstance came to his knowledge, in terror exclaimed, "The boy will come to be hanged!" But when the copy-book was shown to him containing the drawings which the boy had sketched in the holiday he had so nefariously obtained, the father changed his tone, and declared that his "boy was a genius." Many anecdotes are told of the precocity of his talent for landscape and portrait painting. The picture which is known by the name of "Tom Peartree's Portrait"—a work much admired by artists—owes its origin to a singular circumstance. While stealthily sketching some curious old tree in his father's garden, his eye lighted on a man who was gazing with an anxious, thievish expression of countenance upon some pears which tempted his appetite. With the quick perception of genius, Tom seized his opportunity, and in a few minutes sketched, to the life, the man and the pear-tree. The likeness was shown to the father, who, upon the authority of it, taxed the peasant with an intention of stealing his pears. The man, confronted with his likeness taken on the spot and at the moment, had no defence to make.

He left Sudbury, in Suffolk, where the merit of his sketches had already given him a certain reputation, for London, at the age of fourteen. In the metropolis he studied painting under Hayman, one of the companions of Hogarth; though some affirm that he received the first rudiments of his art from Cravelot. However this may have been, it is quite certain that his genius, good looks, and modest deportment, gained him many friends. He had as yet no high opinion of his own powers, and limited his ambition to the prospect of making a livelihood in a provincial town.

After four years of diligent study in London, during which he was initiated into many of the secrets of colour and composition, he returned to Sudbury a painter of acknowledged promise. Painting is almost as intimately connected with romance as poetry, and our young artist, who was now about eighteen years of age, of a susceptible heart and lively imagination, was soon engaged in a tender *liaison* with a blooming Scotch lass of sixteen, who had formed part of a landscape he was painting in one of his professional rambles. The name of this lady was Margaret Burr; she was the reputed daughter of one of the exiled Stuarts, and to many personal advantages, added the more solid attraction of an annuity of two hundred pounds.

"A mutual flame was quickly caught,  
And quickly, too, revealed,  
For neither bosom lodged a thought  
That virtue keeps concealed."

Under the circumstances Gainsborough's parents made no objection to the union; and as the lady was at her own disposal, for once the course of true love *did* run smooth. They married, and settled, in the first instance, at Ipswich, where the young painter became acquainted with the governor of Landguard Fort. Gainsborough's ready wit and artistic talent rendered his society a great acquisition to his new patron, who made him a welcome guest at his table, and for a time used his best endeavours to serve him. The pleasure which the governor experienced in patronising only lasted as long as the artist was submissive and dependent. As a proof of the versatility of Gainsborough's talent, we are told that the governor, who was a respectable performer upon the instrument, presented the painter with a fiddle, and that Gainsborough, after a little practice, acquired so much skill in playing upon it, that the governor declared he would "as soon attempt to paint against him as play against him."

In 1758 the artist removed to Bath, and took lodgings in the Circus, for which he paid fifty pounds a year. His wife, with the characteristic caution of the nation to which she belonged, remonstrated with her husband upon this increase in their expenditure, but as she was a gentle, sweet-tempered woman, and never attempted to rule her husband except by *seeming* to submit, her scruples were overruled. Gainsborough was, in fact, making rapid progress in his profession. His price for a head had risen from five guineas to eight, and as the fame of his skill in taking correct and pleasing likenesses increased, he was able to obtain forty guineas for a half, and a hundred for a whole length portrait. With plenty to do at such prices, the fears which his wife had felt about money matters soon vanished. He had no taste for literature, and when taunted with his aversion to books, he replied that nature was the volume he studied, and that she was sufficient for his purpose. He was, however, devoted to music; and although he could never be induced to learn a note, he acquired considerable proficiency on several kinds of instruments. "Gainsborough's profession," said his friend Jackson, "is painting,

and music is his amusement ; yet there are times when music seems to be his employment and painting his diversion."

In 1774, after sixteen years residence in Bath, Gainsborough removed to London, and took a house in Pall Mall, which had been built by the Duke of Schomberg. His merit as a portrait and landscape painter had already been long appreciated in London by those who for thirteen years had seen his masterpieces exhibited at the Royal Academy. Nevertheless the vain and self-sufficient governor of Landguard Fort, whom Gainsborough had never been able to shake off, attributed all the artist's success in London to a letter of introduction he gave him to Lord Bateman. People of quality besieged him for their portraits ; and even Sir Joshua Reynolds, who had long been established as the first portrait painter of the day, had in Gainsborough a rival whom many preferred. The far-famed Duchess of Devonshire, at that time in all the pride of her unrivalled loveliness, was a suitor for her portrait, but the charms of the peerless beauty were too much for the susceptible painter, and after many unsuccessful efforts, he declined the order. Two sketches of the duchess were afterwards found among his papers, both exquisitely beautiful.

#### "THE BLUE BOY."

The painting from which this engraving is copied, is contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by the Marquis of Westminster. Sir Joshua Reynolds had maintained that the predominance of blue in a picture is incompatible with a good effect of colour. Everybody, at all acquainted with the history of the artists of the time, knows that there was no love lost between the rival painters. Gainsborough could never forgive Sir Joshua for having described him as "the first landscape painter of the day," and he painted this picture with the double object of disproving Sir Joshua's theory about the predominance of blue, and of convincing the world that he was as great in portrait as in landscape painting. The picture is indeed so beautifully conceived and executed, that it would, in the opinion of many, establish Gainsborough's estimate of himself. Of Master Buttolph, the subject of the picture, immortalised by the genius of Gainsborough, we know nothing ; but if, as we have no doubt is the case, the artist has given us a faithful likeness of him, he had an expression of shrewdness and humour in his face which, had the boy improved his natural advantages, were suggestive of future success and distinction. The landscape in which this youth, with his striking blue jacket and trowsers, has been placed, is so remarkable for its sweep of broken ground and woodland, and its masses of lurid sky, that the whole work rises into the ideal of portraiture. It is in itself the history of the boy's prospects. You may gaze upon it until you build up for him a career : until you find yourself speculating upon his character and his advancement. If you look closely into the composition, you will admire the freedom and facility with which it is executed. You will detect no carelessness in the sweeping brushwork of the dress—in the marked yet delicately managed shadows of the face—in the stately sweep of the landscape, or in the lighting up of the stormy sky. At a distance the effect of the picture is still more striking and powerful. The "Blue Boy" stands out like a solid incarnation of flesh and blood from the distance of half the gallery. To judge of its merits, distance is not required : and yet so admirably are the lights and shadows intermingled, that distance adds to the effect of the whole.

#### "TWO BOYS AND FIGHTING DOGS."

The celebrated painting from which this engraving was taken is contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by J. Tollemache, Esq. The scene is most dramatic. The quarrel between the two dogs is very likely to end in a tussle *à l'outrance* between their two masters. Already the owner of the worsted mongrel is rushing, cudgel in hand, to attack the triumphant cur, when he is stopped midway by the other boy, who is determined that his dog shall enjoy uninterrupted the full benefit of the advantage he has gained. The landscape has all the characteristics of Gainsborough's style. His trees have no positive specific character, and his surfaces are treated without much regard to natural texture ; but in colour and general relief—that is, in the value at which the objects tell against the sky—his landscapes are very masterly. "The Boys with Fighting Dogs" is equally admirable, both in the background, and as a powerful rendering of a disagreeable subject.

"LANDSCAPE WITH CHILDREN."

This painting, of which our engraving is a faithful copy, was contributed to the Art Treas Exhibition by J. Tollemache, Esq. The subject is one eminently calculated to develop the peculiar of Gainsborough's genius. "There is a charm," says Allan Cunningham, "about the children run wild in the landscapes of Gainsborough which is more deeply felt by comparing them with those Reynolds. The children of Sir Joshua are indeed beautiful creations, free, artless, and lovely; they seem all to have been nursed in velvet laps, and fed with golden spoons. There is a rustic and an untamed wildness about the children of the other, which speak of the country and of neglect."



LANDSCAPE WITH CHILDREN. FROM A PAINTING BY THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH.

(Contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by J. Tollemache, Esq.)

toilets. They are the offspring of nature, running free amongst woods as wild as themselves. They are not afraid of disordering their satins, and wetting their kid shoes. They roll on the green sward like rabbits, and dabble in the running stream daily."

"THE BROOK."

This is one of those beautiful *morceaux* in which Gainsborough so far excelled all the artists of his day. There is a rustic reality and beauty about the landscape which appeals forcibly to the hearts of those who have been nurtured in the midst of similar scenes. "The chief works of Gainsborough," says

biographer, "are not what is usually called landscape, for he had no wish to create gardens of paradise, and leave them to the sole enjoyment of the sun and breeze. The wildest nooks of his woods have their living tenants, and in all his glades and valleys we see the sons and daughters of men. A deep human sympathy unites us with his pencil; and this is not lessened because all his works are stamped with the image of Old England. His paintings have a natural look. He belongs to no School. He has not reflected from the glass of man, but from that of nature; he has not steeped his landscapes in the



THE COTTAGE DOOR. FROM A PAINTING BY THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH.

(Copied and used in the Art Treasures Exhibition by John Bentley, Esq.)

atmosphere of Italy, like Wilson; nor borrowed the postures of his portraits from the old masters, like Reynolds. No academy schooled down into uniformity and imitation the truly English and intrepid nature of Gainsborough. It must not, however, be denied that his productions are sometimes disfigured by the impatience of his nature, and the fiery haste in which he wrought. Wishing to do quickly what his mind conceived strongly, he often neglected, in the dashing vigour of his hand, many

of those lesser graces which lend art so much of its attractiveness. He felt the whole, indeed, at once; he was possessed fully with the sentiment of his subject; he struck off his favourite subjects at one continuous heat of thought, and all is clear, connected, and consistent. But, like Nature herself, he performed some of his duties with a careless haste; and in many, both of his portraits and his landscapes, we see evident marks of inattention and hurry."

#### "THE COTTAGE DOOR."

The painting from which this engraving is copied is one of Gainsborough's most celebrated productions, and has been contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by J. Bentley, Esq. It represents a cottage matron with an infant in her arms. There are several older children, who are enjoying themselves at the door of a little rustic cabin. It is a kind of lodge in a wilderness, deeply embedded in a woody recess, and through the avenues of trees glimpses of knolls and streams are caught at intervals. The breadth and mass of this picture are especially remarkable, and in the colouring there is a peculiar richness derived from the admixture of brown and glossy gold, which is characteristic of Gainsborough's style. The matron is in person the *beau idéal* of a youthful cottage dame, uniting with an innate gentleness of expression that rustic loveliness for which our Isle of Beauty is so famous.

#### "THE DONKEY RACE."

This is one of Gainsborough's most popular conceptions, and even in the engraving the life and reality of the original picture may be traced. The expression in the faces of the boys, who seem to have infused into the spirit of the asses they are urging forward in the struggle some of the mettle and ambition of the thorough-bred racer, is admirably conceived. The one, who is three parts of a length in advance of the other, is already snapping his fingers in triumph, and exulting in the applause which his success has elicited from the assembled crowd of spectators. The other, whose boast, notwithstanding the almost superhuman efforts of his rider, cannot keep pace with the rival donkey, is proportionably disheartened and depressed. We can read in his face vexation and defeat as plainly as if they were written there in legible characters. He is, nevertheless, making a last and vigorous effort to regain the ground he has lost; but the goal is close at hand, and already he hears the shouts of victory which hail the triumph of his successful antagonist. The excitement is on a minor scale, but almost equal in intensity, among those who are abetting the two young jockeys, to that which we see displayed at Epsom or Ascot.

In this picture of Gainsborough's the criticism of Reynolds, who, although a rival, was too honest a man not to acknowledge our artist's merit, applies with peculiar force: "It is certain," said Sir Joshua, "that all those odd scratches and marks which, on a close examination, are so observable in Gainsborough's pictures, and which, even to experienced painters, appear rather the effect of accident than design—this chaos, this uncouth and shapeless appearance, by a kind of magic at a certain distance, assumes form, and all the parts seem to drop into their proper places, so that we can hardly forbear acknowledging the full effect of diligence under the appearance of chance and hasty negligence." That Gainsborough himself considered this peculiarity in his manner, and the power if possessed in creating surprise as a beauty in his works, may be inferred from the eager desire which we know he always expressed, that his pictures at the exhibition should be seen near as well as at a distance. The imagination supplies all that is left undefined, and perhaps more satisfactorily to the spectator, if not more exactly, than the artist with all his care could have done.

Gainsborough possessed no inconsiderable share of what the French call *le talent de la société*. His gentlemanly presence and manners, wit, humour, and affability, made him everywhere a welcome guest. Among the most intimate of his friends and admirers were Sir George Beaumont, a fine specimen of the Old English gentleman, and the celebrated Richard Brinsley Sheridan. We are told that as the trio were one day dining together, the two friends remarked that Gainsborough, who was usually the life of the party, was silent and gloomy. Unable to shake off his sadness, he took Sheridan aside, and told him that what oppressed him was a *presentiment* that he had not long to live. "Now," said he, "as I am anxious to have one worthy man to accompany me to the grave, may I bespeak your attend-

ance at my funeral?" Sheridan was somewhat startled at the curious nature of the request, but made the promise he exacted, and throughout the rest of the evening Gainsborough was himself again.

With Reynolds he had little sympathy, and their intercourse with one another was always tinged with suspicion and distrust. They had, however, at one time agreed upon an exchange of portraits; but although Reynolds sat once to Gainsborough, the picture was never finished. There was a misunderstanding between them which was not cleared up until Gainsborough, on his death-bed, sent for Reynolds. They had lived as rivals, and jealous of each other's fame, but Death reconciled their differences. About a year after the date of the dinner at which he had exacted the promise from Sheridan, he went to hear the impeachment of Warren Hastings, and while sitting with his back to an open window, he is said to have felt something inconceivably cold touch his neck, above the shirt collar. In the evening he examined the part, and found a spot, about the size of a shilling. Coupling the circumstance with his former presentiment, he exclaimed, "If this be a cancer I am a dead man." The faculty ridiculed the idea; but his own conviction of his danger proved in the end to be better founded than the opinion of the doctors. The dreadful malady spread with a rapidity which rendered medical assistance of no avail, and on the 2nd of August, 1788, he expired, in the sixty-first year of his age. Sheridan and Reynolds attended his funeral.

Gainsborough was handsome in person, gentlemanly in manner, and in conversation witty, humorous, and persuasive. He never affected any taste for *les belles lettres*, but his letters are, nevertheless, remarkable for ease, fluency, and high spirit. He has been taxed with a licentious freedom of expression, but the age in which he lived is more accountable for the questionable nature of his jokes than the painter himself. At Rome we must do as they do at Rome, and in the society of such men as Sheridan, a squeamish delicacy of expression would have exposed him to ridicule. As a portrait painter he was perhaps hardly equal to Reynolds, but his landscapes are entitled, as Walpole says, "to rank in the noblest collections." It is difficult to ascertain the date of his various productions, as he rarely, if ever, affixed either a name or a date to any of them. "The Woodman and his Dog in a Storm," "The Shepherd's Boy in a Shower," "The Cottage Girl with her Dog and Pitcher," the far-famed "Blue Boy," and "The Cottage Door," both of which are in Lord Grosvenor's collection, are among the most famous of his master-pieces. He is said to have painted "The Blue Boy" with the view of proving to the world that Sir Joshua was wrong in asserting that the prevalence of "blue" in his pictures marred their beauty and effect. The original of the picture was a Master Butall, of whom we know nothing; but the expression of shrewdness and humour which Gainsborough has thrown into his face, has immortalised the obscure youth. The cerulean splendour of his coat has in it something rather startling, but it is this very brilliancy of the blue which sets off the beauty of the figure and the landscape; and they must be very green indeed who do not recognise the extraordinary merit of the whole picture. Among all the productions of the painters of the English school exhibited at Manchester, there is nothing which has attracted more universal admiration than Gainsborough's "Blue Boy."

Much as Gainsborough's widow lamented his loss, her grief did not prevent her from making, as soon as possible, all she could out of the gallery of pictures he had bequeathed to her. In the spring which followed his death she opened an exhibition of his productions in Pall-mall. The pictures were fifty-six in number, and the drawings were as many as one hundred and forty-eight. Like a true Scotchwoman, she had a keen eye for the main chance, and did not allow any sentimental weakness to prevent her marking them all for sale. Some of these were sold at the exhibition, and the rest were disposed of by public auction. The celebrated "Blue Boy," after having passed through the hands of a variety of possessors, found its way into the Grosvenor Gallery, to which it will be restored when the Art Treasures Exhibition at Manchester closes.

### THE COMPARISON.

In comparing Reynolds with Gainsborough, and striking the balance of their respective merits, we must take into the account the different nature of their training. Reynolds was the pupil of Hudson, a routine portrait painter of some note, whose success was owing not to any innate talent for the profession he had chosen, but to that strange pertinacity with which the English, as a nation, cleave to old notions, old habits, and old prejudices.



At that time Allan Cunningham tells us "that students consumed their time in drawing incessantly from other men's works, and vainly thought, by gazing constantly on the unattainable excellence of Raphael and Correggio, to catch a portion of their inspiration. When any one departed from such tame and servile rules, he was pronounced a Gothic draughtsman, and unworthy of being numbered among those happy persons patronised by St. Luke." This accounts for the name of Hogarth being rarely or never found in the lectures or letters of the artists of his own time. Men who are regularly trained to the admiration of a certain class of works, admit few into the ranks of painting who have not a kind of academic certificate, and lop carefully away all wild or overflourishing branches from the tree of regular art. Amongst persons of this stamp, to admire Hogarth amounts to treason against the great



THE BROOK. FROM A PAINTING BY THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH.

masters. The painters of those days were worshippers of the grand style—a term which would seem to mean something alone and unapproachable; for no man offered to make any approach to it by works that partook of either dignity or imagination.

Reynolds, tutored in this school, retained to the last many of the prejudices belonging to it. In all his discourses we find that he inculcates these old-world, hackneyed, and impracticable maxims. He had, indeed, in practice, emancipated himself from the trammels of *routine*, but, in theory, he still clung to them. "He was fond of seeking," says his biographer, "into the secrets of the old painters, and dissected some of their performances, without remorse or scruple, to ascertain their mode of laying on colour, and finishing with effect. Titian he conceived to be the great master spirit in portraiture; and no enthusiast in usury ever sought more incessantly for the secret of the philosopher's stone than did Reynolds to possess himself of the whole theory and practice of the Venetian. But this was a



THE DONKEY RACE. FROM A PAINTING BY THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH.

concealed pursuit ; he disclosed his discoveries to none ; he lectured on Michael Angelo, and discoursed on Raphael ; but he studied and dreamed of Titian. 'To possess,' said the artist, 'a real fine picture by that great master, I would sell all my gallery ; I would willingly ruin myself.' "

But while he was thus magniloquently talking of the grand style, he closed his lips both to his

friends and his pupils concerning the domestic style and the mystery of portraiture in which he himself was unequalled. He knew how numerous are the admirers of portrait painting, and that it is pleasant to read the history of the social and domestic affections of the country in innumerable productions of this kind. There seems, then, to have been a constant struggle going on within himself between the principles of high art, such as he had learned to appreciate in the school of routine and at Rome, and those principles of which his better sense approved, and which he had found in practice so profitable and popular.

Gainsborough was a genius of a very different order. He was in everything the disciple of nature, and followed the bent of his own inspiration, unfettered by the principles or practice of any school or country. Portrait painting was the most profitable, but landscape and music were his *spécialités*. He had indeed two mistresses. The one he courted for gain, the other from pure affection. Gainsborough was, by nature, open-hearted, generous, trusting, and unsuspecting; too proud to truckle to wealth or rank, and too conscious of the superiority which genius conferred upon him to care for the favour of the great. Reynolds was, on the contrary, of a cold and calculating disposition, parsimonious in his habits, and a worshipper of rank and station. Gainsborough delighted in painting children such as he had beheld them, running wild in the rural scenes he so loved to represent, while those of Reynolds are all children of condition, nursed in the lap of luxury, with clothes so fine in texture, and of so recent a fashion, that we are conscious of beholding in them the future lords and ladies of the *beau monde*.

In all this, the works of Reynolds and Gainsborough are as entirely dissimilar as their characters; but neither of these popular artists had much in common with the great painters of Italy.

There is too much nature and reality in both. The infants of Raphael, Titian, or Correggio have scarcely anything earthly about them; they are more like the children of gods than men; more divine than human. We can scarcely imagine, when we contemplate them, that they were ever suckled by the daughters of Eve. We may admire, but we cannot feel that love or sympathy for them that we do for the rustic children of Gainsborough, rolling on the green sward, burrowing like rabbits, or dabbling in the running brooks, or for those pampered, but not less life-like, scions of the aristocracy which Reynolds preferred for his models.

Gainsborough was born in 1727, and died in 1788, in the sixty-first year of his age. Reynolds was born in 1723, and died in the year 1792, in the sixty-ninth year of his age; thus surviving, by four years, his rival, who was his junior by three years. Gainsborough had greatly the advantage in personal appearance, though inferior to Reynolds in the accident of birth; since the father of the first was a clothier by trade, while the latter was the son of a clergyman. They verified, in their intercourse with one another, the wisdom of the old saying, that "two of a trade can never agree." "The cold and carefully-metted-out courtesy of the one," says the biographer, "little suited with the curious mixture of candour and caprice in the other, and, like frost and fire, which some convulsion casts into momentary contact, they jostled, and then retired from each other, never more to meet till Gainsborough summoned Reynolds to his death-bed." Some unnatural fit of good-will once brought them together. On reflection, they separated, and continued to speak of one another after their own natures—Gainsborough with open scorn, Reynolds with courteous, cautious insinuation. It is true, however, that they at length forgave each other—that Gainsborough, on his *death-bed*, made atonement for his opposition, and relinquished all dislike, and that of Gainsborough, after he was in his grave, Reynolds spoke with truth and justice.

Gainsborough's drawings are very numerous and masterly. No artist of the time has bequeathed to us so many gems of this kind. In speaking of them, his friend Jackson remarks, "I have seen at least a thousand, not one of which but what possesses merit, and some in a transcendent degree. His sketches of ladies are some of the finest things I have ever seen; and of these the Duchess of Devonshire is perhaps the most striking and beautiful. She seems to smile upon those who gaze upon her, like the presiding genius of her own groves at Chatsworth." The names of his finest sketches are lost, but we do not think this a matter of any importance. The merit of the drawings commands universal admiration. In this respect the most prejudiced must own that the comparison is all in favour of Gainsborough.

## JOHN CONSTABLE.



ONSTABLE, the celebrated landscape painter, was the son of a miller, and was born at Dedham, in Essex, in the year 1776. The locality of his birth, and the business to which he was trained in his boyhood, gave a certain tone and character to all his artistic productions, in which, as he himself confesses, there is a preponderance of mills, streams, dams, dykes, and weirs. The peculiar atmospheric effects for which he was so remarkable, were attributable to his early reminiscences of the variegated and beautiful colouring produced by the rays of the sun on the water, as they fell in showers from the wheel of his father's mill.

Our materials for a biography of this celebrated artist are very meagre and imperfect. Indeed, of his early life we know so little, that we imagine it must have been spent in actually working in those mills which he afterwards so skilfully represented upon canvas.

The first authentic accounts we have of his artistic life are subsequent to his admission as a student of the Royal Academy, in the year 1800. He was at that time already in the twenty-fifth year of his age; and when we recollect how great a progress in their profession other artists who preceded him in the same style had made before they reached his time of life, we see that he was not by any means a precocious genius.

That his success was uncertain, and that the proceeds of his art came in but slowly and at long intervals, is proved by the fact of his being compelled, for the sake of economy, to take up his quarters, during the first period of his studentship, in America-square, Minories—a place so remote from the haunts of fashion, that we dare say many of our exclusive readers are ignorant of its existence. Genius, however, cannot long be buried in obscurity, even when domiciled in the far East; and a picture which Constable painted and exhibited at the Exhibition of the Royal Academy, while he was still a sojourner in the purlieus of Whitechapel, brought him into notice.

That there is something striking in his style of painting is proved by the fact, that it was as much admired by some as it was criticised by others. Ruskin, in his "Modern Painters," compares, and we think with unjustifiable partiality, the masterpieces of Constable with those of Turner and Claude Lorraine. Speaking of one of Turner's trees which he calls "a finished work even in outline," he says: "In order to show its perfectness better by contrast with bad work, I will take for a bit of Constable the principal tree out of the engraving of the 'Lock on the Stour.'"

"It differs from the Claude outline merely in being the kind of work which is produced by an uninventive person dashing about idly with a brush instead of drawing determinately wrong with a pen; on the one hand worse than Claude's, in being lazier, on the other a little better, in being more free; but as the representative of tree form, wholly barbarous. This trunk of Constable's is curiously illustrative of the description we have given of an uninventive painter at work on a tree. One can almost see him, first bending it to the right—then having gone long enough to the right turning to the left—then having gone long enough to the left, away to the right again—then dividing it; and because there is another tree in the picture with two long branches (in this case there really is), we know that this ought to have three or four which must undulate or go backwards and forwards, &c. &c.

"Then study the bit of Turner's work; note first its quietness, unattractiveness, apparent carelessness, whether you look at it or not; next, note the subtle curvatures within the narrowest limits, and when it branches, the unexpected out-of-the-way things it does, just what nobody could have thought of its doing, shooting out like a letter Y, with a nearly straight branch, and then correcting its stiffness with a zig-zag behind, so that the boughs, ugly individually, are beautiful in unison."

We quote a short criticism from the same writer upon another favourite production of Constable's, because we wish to prove how easy it is for those who are disciples of the pre-Raphaelite heresy to find defects in *chefs d'œuvre* which have stood the test even of time.

"I place," says Ruskin, "a bit of trunk, by Constable, from another plate (a Dell in Helming-

ham Park, Suffolk) for the sake of the same comparison in shade that we have above in contour. You see Constable does not know whether he is drawing moss or shadow. Those dark touches in the middle are confused in his mind between the dark stains on the trunk and its dark side. There is no anatomy, no cast shadow, nothing but idle sweeps of the brush, vaguely circular. The thing is much darker than Turner's, but it is not therefore finished, it is only blackened. And 'to blacken,' is indeed the proper word for all attempts at finish without knowledge. All true finish is *added fact*; and Turner's word for finishing a picture was always this significant one—'carry forward.' But labour without added knowledge can only blacken or stain a picture, it cannot finish it." We must, however, bear in mind that neither the connoisseurs nor the public at large have endorsed this sweeping condemnation of Constable, whose productions are as popular with the present generation as they were with the last.



JOHN CONSTABLE.

We cannot give a better illustration of the unfair preference which the pre-Raphaelite school gives to Turner than by quoting one or two more of their advocate's prejudiced comparisons. "Constable," says Ruskin, "takes me out into a shower, and Claude into the sun, and De Wint makes me feel as if I were walking in the fields; but Turner keeps me in the house, and I know always that I am looking at a picture. If you want to feel as if you were in a shower, cannot you go out and get wet without help from Constable? If you want to feel as if you were walking in the fields, cannot you go and walk in them without help from De Wint? But if you want to sit in your room and look at a beautiful picture, why should you blame the artist for getting you one. This was the answer actually made to me by various journalists when first I showed that Turner was truer than other painters. 'Nay,' said they, 'we do not want truth, we want something else than truth; we would not have nature, but something better than nature.'"



PIRAC

THE LOCK. FROM A PAINTING BY JOHN CONSTABLE, R.A.

*(Continued to the Art Treasures by the Royal Academy.)*

In 1802 Constable's name appeared for the first time as a contributor to the Exhibition of the Royal Academy. The picture of which the managing committee approved was entitled "Landscape," and is, in many respects, inferior, in the opinion of connoisseurs, to another production of the same artist, entitled "A Cornfield with Reapers at Work," which they rejected. An anecdote is related concerning this picture, which will be interesting to the admirers of Constable. A certain Samuel Strowger, a native of Suffolk, who had begun life as a ploughman on a farm in the vicinity of Constable's Mill, and had afterwards enlisted in the Guards, where, on account of the symmetry of his form, and the grace of his attitudes, he was selected as a model by the students of the Royal Academy, was anxious to do his country neighbour a service among the members of that honourable Society. Our artist's landscapes were peculiarly pleasing to Sam, because they recalled to his memory the scene of his early life, and he pointed out to the Managing Committee a "Cornfield with Reapers at Work" as especially worthy of their attention, on account of the correctness with which "*the lord*," as the leading man among reapers is called in Suffolk, was represented. The piece was, however, notwithstanding Sam's recommendation, rejected, and the *model* endeavoured to console his friend, and at the same time apologise for the Managing Committee, by remarking: "Our gentlemen are all great artists, sir, but they none of them know anything about '*the lord*.'"

This same Samuel Strowger is the original of the intelligent looking farmer in Wilkie's "Rent Day," who, seated at the table with his finger raised, appears to be recalling some circumstance to the recollection of the steward.

From West, who was at this time President of the Royal Academy, Constable received many proofs of friendship and regard. A picture, entitled "Flatford Mill," which a majority of the Committee had rejected, Constable carried to Mr. West, who, perceiving how much the young artist was disappointed and distressed, said, in a kind and encouraging tone, "Don't be disheartened, young man; we shall hear of you again. You must have loved nature very much before you could have painted this." He then gave Constable some useful hints in *chiaro-oscuro*, and concluded by saying, "Always remember, sir, that light and shadow never *stand still*. Whatever object you are painting, keep in mind its prevailing character rather than its accidental appearance (unless in the subject there is some peculiar reason for the latter), and never be content until you have transferred that to canvas. In your skies, for instance, always aim at brightness, although there are states of the atmosphere in which the sky itself is not bright. I do not mean that you are not to paint solemn or lowering skies; but even in the darkest effects there should be brightness. Your darks should look like the darks of silver, not of lead or of slate."

Constable profited by this advice, which he said was the best lecture, because a practical one, which he had ever heard on *chiaro-oscuro*.

In 1803 Constable's contributions to the Royal Academy consisted of two "Landscapes," and two "Studies from Nature." About this time he took to drawing sea-pieces, and made a trip from London to Deal in "The Coutts," an East Indiaman commanded by Captain Torin, a friend of his father. He took sketches of the "Victory," a three-decker of 112 guns, in three different views; but when he quitted the East Indiaman there was such confusion on board that, although he had done up his drawings very carefully, he left them all behind. He alludes to this misfortune in the following words: "When I found, on landing, that I had left my drawings, and saw the ship out of reach, I was ready to faint. I hope, however, I may see them again some time or other." He did recover them all (they were about one hundred and thirty in number) a short time after, and we find that he very soon made use of them as subjects for his paintings.

In 1805 he exhibited a landscape called "Moonlight;" and in 1806 a drawing of "His Majesty's Ship Victory in the Battle of Trafalgar between two French Ships of the Line." In the autumn of this year he made a tour among the lakes, the results of which were seen the following spring in the Exhibition of the Royal Academy, to which he contributed three pictures—"A View in Westmoreland," "Keswick Lake," and "Bow Fell, Cumberland."

He much improved his taste for colour and *chiaro-oscuro* by copying for Lord Dysart, who was desirous of having duplicates of some of his family pictures, many of the *chefs-d'œuvres* of Sir Joshua Reynolds. Some of his admirers regretted this employment of his time; but however original may have been his genius, he certainly profited by the study of the pictures he was deputed to copy.

In 1808 he again contributed three pictures to the Royal Academy, entitled "Borrowdale," "A Scene in Cumberland," and "Windermere Lake;" and in 1809 an additional three, under the head of "Landscape."

About this time he turned his attention to sacred subjects; but neither his "Christ Blessing Little Children," which he painted as an altar-piece for Brantham Church, near Bergholt, nor his single half-figure of "The Saviour Blessing the Bread and Wine," which was intended for Neyland Church, was of sufficient promise to warrant his continued exertions in this style. He managed in the last-mentioned picture to introduce some very agreeable effects of colour by blending purple with brownish yellow in the draperies, as a substitute for the ordinary blue and red; but the artistic deficiencies are so great, that it is evident he must have submitted to a long course of instruction before he could have succeeded in sacred subjects. He was, therefore, right to devote all his energies to the attainment of excellence in that style for which he was by nature and education so well adapted.

Constable made at this time the acquaintance of John Jackson, and the intimacy which soon sprang up between the artists afterwards ripened into a firm and lasting friendship. He was also on very good terms with Wilkie, to whom he sat for the head of the physician in the picture of "The Sick Lady." There were many points of sympathy between the Scotch painter and Constable which drew them together, and made them appreciate their mutual worth. Constable was much in need of the advice and consolation of friends, for although he was making rapid progress in his profession, and the public were beginning to acknowledge his merit, he was for many years destined to sue in vain for the hand of the young lady who was the object of his tender and constant attachment.

Miss Maria Bicknell, the lady to whom we allude, was the daughter of Charles Bicknell, Esq., Solicitor to the Admiralty, and granddaughter, on her mother's side, to the Rev. Dr. Rhudde, Rector of Bergholt, where Constable's acquaintance with her had commenced as early as the year 1800, while she was yet a child. The attachment was mutual, but the parents of Miss Bicknell objected to what they considered a *mésalliance* for their child, since Constable, who could scarcely be said to have any decided profession, was inferior both in birth and fortune to the daughter of the Admiralty Solicitor.

The epistolary correspondence between the lovers during the five years of delay—which the opposition of Miss Bicknell's friends, and above all of her grandfather, Dr. Rhudde, whom Mr. Bicknell, for pecuniary reasons, was most unwilling to offend, occasioned in their happiness—contains a deeply interesting history of this period of the artist's life. The various alternations of hope and fear, of doubt and disappointment, told visibly on Constable's health, and his predisposition to melancholy is evident from the following paragraph in a letter addressed to Miss Bicknell about the end of 1814: "At the same time that I received your letter," he says, "I had one from my mother, so amusing that I long to show it to you. It is quite a journal of the time I was with them; though she regrets, at the end, that my natural propensity to escape from notice should have so much increased upon me." The reply of Miss Bicknell was sensible, affectionate, and encouraging. "It appears strange," she writes, "that a professional man should shun society. Surely it cannot be the way to promote his interest. Why you should no longer be anxious for fame is what I cannot comprehend. It is paying me a very ill compliment. If you wish to remain single, it may do very well. We shall return to town next Tuesday. I trust the following day, if it should be tolerably fine, to have the pleasure of seeing the reclus in St. James's-park about twelve o'clock; if not, the following day at the same hour."

Next year Constable lost his mother, whose pride had long been centred in her son, and who had felt his joys and sorrows, hopes and disappointments, as though they had been her own. Curious to relate, Miss Bicknell lost her mother not many days after the death of Mrs. Constable. His father, who had long been ailing, and to whose precarious state of health, and the wearing anxiety it occasioned his wife, may be attributed her premature death, did not long survive his attentive and affectionate helpmate. He died of dropsy about the middle of May, 1816. But fortune had some compensation in store for the accumulated sorrows with which Constable had been afflicted. Miss Bicknell, finding that her father refused to relent, and that she gained nothing by any further concessions, determined at last to marry without his consent. She was now twenty-nine years of age, and quite capable of judging for herself on so important a point. These two interesting and constant lovers were married at St. Martin's Church, on the 2nd of October, 1816, by a Mr. Fisher, a friend of Constable, who had used his





THE CORN FIELD. FROM A PAINTING BY JOHN CONSTABLE, R.A.

influence with Miss Bicknell in persuading her to reward, by her acceptance of him, the long and unchanging devotion of her suitor.

The marriage of Constable with Miss Bicknell created a complete and most propitious change in his prospects and position. The father of the bride could not long withhold his forgiveness from a darling

Exhibitions of the Royal Academy, was elected an Associate of that honourable fraternity. On this memorable occasion he received the following note from Mr. Fisher :—

*"Close, Salisbury, November, 1819.—My dear Constable,—The Bishop and Mrs. Fisher bid me, with my own, to present their congratulations on your honourable election. Honourable it is, for the Royal Academy is, in the first place, an establishment of this great country, and as such, to be held in great respect; and, in the second place, you owe your election to no favour, but solely to your unsupported, unpatronised merits. I reckon it no small feather in my cap that I have had the sagacity to find them out."*

In 1822 Constable contributed to the Exhibition of the Royal Academy five pictures,—*"Hampstead Heath," "A View on the Stour, near Dedham," "Malvern Hill, Warwickshire," "A View of the Terrace, Hampstead,"* and a *"Study of Trees from Nature."* From a letter addressed to his friend Fisher, we find that in the year 1823 he was already the father of two sons and two daughters, and that his professional progress was considerably impeded by the cares and interruptions inseparable from the matrimonial state. *"What with anxiety, watching, nursing, and my own indisposition, I have not seen the face of my easel since Christmas; and it is not the least of my troubles that the good Bishop's picture is not fit to be seen."* But although Constable, like the rest of his suffering race, was doomed to experience the truth of the saying, *"that there is no happiness without alloy,"* his letters to his wife from Cole-Orton prove how sincere and constant was his attachment to his wife, and how great and enduring were the blessings he enjoyed through his alliance with her.

#### "THE LOCK."

In 1825 he painted his celebrated picture of *"The Lock,"* from which our engraving is copied. Speaking of this *chef-d'œuvre*, he says, *"My 'Lock' is now on my easel. It is silvery, windy, and delicious; all health, and the absence of everything stagnant, and is wonderfully got together. The print will be fine."* I. W. Reynolds, the celebrated engraver, who was an admirable judge of pictures, endorsed the estimate which the artist had formed of his own production. Writing to Constable on the subject, he says: *"I have, since the arrival of your picture, been before it for the last hour, the light of a cheerful day through the clear windows falling full upon it. It is no doubt the best of your works; true to nature; seen and arranged with a professor's taste and judgment. The execution shows in every part a hand of experience; masterly without rudeness, and complete without littleness. The colouring is sweet, fresh, and healthy; bright, not gaudy; but deep and clear. Take it for all in all, since the days of Gainsborough and Wilson, no landscape has been painted with so much truth and originality, so much art, so little artifice."*

The following year (1826) Constable, having laid aside for a time his large picture, *"Waterloo,"* with which he was proceeding slowly, commenced a subject more congenial to his taste, entitled

#### "THE CORNFIELD,"

which, when finished, was exhibited at the Royal Academy. Speaking himself of this picture, from which our engraving is copied, he says: *"I have despatched a large landscape to the Academy, upright, of the size of 'The Lock,' but a subject of a very different nature. Inland cornfields and a close lane forming the foreground. It is not neglected in any part. The trees are more than usually studied; the extremities well defined, as well as the stems. They are shaken by a pleasant as well as healthful breeze at noon—*

*'While now a fresher gale  
Sweetens with shadowy gusts the fields of corn,' &c. &c.*

I am not without my anxieties, though I have not neglected my work, or been sparing of my pains." After the death of Constable this picture was purchased by the admirers of his genius, and presented to the National Gallery in the year 1837. The large picture of *"Salisbury from the Meadows"* had been selected, on account of its magnitude, subject, and grandeur of treatment, as best suited to a public collection; but the majority of Constable's admirers decided that the boldness of its execution

rendered it less likely to address itself to the general taste than the picture of "The Cornfield," which was in consequence selected in its stead.

In the autumn of 1828, Mrs. Constable, who had long been suffering from pulmonary consumption, became so alarmingly worse, that her husband began to despair of her recovery. In the September preceding the November in which she breathed her last, he writes to Mr. D. Colnaghi: "I am greatly unhappy at my dear wife's illness. Her progress towards amendment is sadly slow; but still they tell me she does mend. Pray God this be the case; I am much worn with anxiety." And in a note to Mr. J. Lane, dated October: "My dear wife continues much the same; I do hope she is not worse, and home may do wonders." His hopes were doomed to be disappointed. Mrs. Constable's sufferings, which she had endured with that entire resignation to the will of Providence which she had shown under every circumstance of her life, ended at last in her premature and much lamented death. She expired on the 23rd of November, 1828, leaving a broken-hearted husband and a family of sorrowing children to grieve over their irremediable loss.

Constable survived his wife eight years, but existence for him had lost its charm; and although he still continued to paint, and the honours and emoluments of his profession came thick and fast upon him, he had no longer any one to feel that engrossing sympathy in his fortunes which made success doubly dear to him.

In 1829 he was elected a Member of the Royal Academy. Much as he was pleased at the attainment of a distinction which ought to have been conferred upon him at a much earlier period of his life, he could not help remarking, "It has been delayed until I am solitary, and cannot impart it."

#### "THE FARM OF THE VALLEY,"

of which our engraving is a faithful copy, was painted by Constable in April, 1835. Speaking of this, his last great masterpiece, he says: "I have got my picture into a very beautiful state. I have kept my brightness without spottiness, and I have preserved God Almighty's daylight, which is enjoyed by all mankind, excepting only the lovers of old dirty canvas, perished pictures at a thousand guineas each, cart-grease, tar, and snuff of candle. Mr. — called to see my picture, and did not like it at all, so I am sure there is something good in it. Soon after Mr. Vernon called, and bought it, having never seen it before in any state."

This beautiful painting was the only work Constable sent to the Exhibition of the Royal Academy in the year 1835. The subject was taken from a sketch which he had in early life taken of Willy Scott's house, and he had the good luck of securing on this occasion the unbought approval of some of the newspaper critics.

#### "OSMINGTON SHORE, NEAR WEYMOUTH."

The picture from which our engraving is taken was a much earlier production than either of the foregoing. It was exhibited for the first time at the British Gallery, in 1819. It has all the peculiarities of Constable's style—solemn, lowering skies, and a poetical shade in the colouring of the landscape, which soothes while it saddens the spectator. Constable was a frequent visitor at Osmington, where his old and constant friend Fisher resided. In writing to him from the scene of this picture, Fisher gives an account of a strange and sudden death. "My dear Constable," says he, "I am here paying the last duties to my wife's mother. She died silently and suddenly on Monday morning, at three o'clock. Rather a singular accident happened to me in consequence of her death. I was in the church at Osmington with the old clerk alone, pointing out the site of her grave, when the old man suddenly exclaimed, 'I cannot stand, sir!' and, dropping into my arms, died."

The Houses of Parliament were burnt on the 16th of October, 1834; and Constable, with his two sons, watched the progress of the devouring element in a hackney-coach, from Westminster Bridge. A fortnight afterwards, while passing the evening with his friend Leslie, he drew, for the benefit of the company, an inkling, on half a sheet of paper, of Westminster Hall as it appeared during the conflagration. On another half sheet he added the towers of the Abbey with that of St. Margaret's Church,

and the two papers together formed the most accurate and artistic sketch of the scene. It is thus men of real genius can often produce more striking effects by a few strokes, drawn apparent random, than inferior artists by their most elaborate efforts.

We have said that Constable, though resigned to the will of Providence, was never consoled the loss of his wife, whom he only survived eight years. Grief undermines the constitution, and ravaging effects are not the less certain because they are secret and silent.



RAIN, STEAM, AND GREAT SMOKEY MOUNTAINS. FROM A PAINTING BY JOHN CONSTABLE, R.A.

"One fa'al remembrance, one sorrow that throws  
Its bleak shade alike o'er our joys and our woes;  
To which life nothing brighter nor darker can bring,  
For which joy has no balm and affliction no sting."

had saddened the tenor of his life. His friends, Fisher and Dunthorne, had preceded him on the voyage to the invisible shore, and he had "seen, from life's shining circle, the gems drop away." Leslie, who knew him well, says of him, in March, 1837, a few days before his sudden illness and death:



J. M. W. TURNER, R.A. DRAWN BY J. GILBERT.

"If his intimate friends were but imperfectly acquainted with the real state of his feelings, those who knew him but slightly, and who seldom saw him, unless surrounded by smiles of his own creating, could not have believed how much he was now a prey to melancholy and anxious thoughts—thoughts, no doubt, in part both the cause and effect of declining health.

On the 30th of March, 1837, he attended a general assembly of the Royal Academy, and the whole of the next day he was busily engaged in finishing a picture of "Arundel Mill and Castle" for the ensuing exhibition. He walked out in the evening, returned about nine o'clock, ate a hearty supper, and, feeling chilly, had his bed warmed. He read himself to sleep, but soon awoke in great pain, and called to his son, who had just returned from the theatre. Some rhubarb and magnesia which he took without medical advice, produced sickness; and when a neighbouring practitioner, of the name of Michele, arrived, he was in a fainting fit. The surgeon immediately ordered some brandy but before it could be procured Constable had expired. There was a *post-mortem* examination by Professor Partridge; but, strange to say, no traces of disease could be discovered sufficient to occasion death. The sudden extinction of life was probably owing to the exhausting ravages of that indefinite and insidious complaint known to the faculty by the name of "a fret of nerve." He was buried by the side of his wife, in a vault in Hampstead Churchyard; and the tablet which bears the touching and beautiful inscription he had himself chosen for her epitaph, covers the remains of husband and wife:—

Eheu quam tenui e filo pendet  
Quicquid in vitâ maximè aridet.

Mr. Andrew Robertson, in speaking of Constable's artistic merits, remarks:—"He had his peculiarities, but they were not in conception, nor in the way in which he looked at nature; he saw clearly, and not through a glass darkly, nor through other men's eyes. His peculiarities were only in his execution, and in the admirable picture selected for his monument in the National Gallery (*viz.* the 'Cornfield,' *vide* page 84), we find all his truth of conception, with less of the manner that was objected to than in most of his later works."

Constable's benevolence was active and discriminating. Numerous instances are recorded of it and if, as we fully believe, those who give to the poor lend unto the Lord, he had laid up for himself treasure in Heaven, "where neither moth nor rust corrupts, nor thieves break through and steal. Like Hogarth, whom he greatly resembled in character, he incurred the imputation of vanity; but this we attribute more to the enmity of contemporary artists, whose works he criticised with freedom and impartiality, than to any reasonable grounds for the accusation. He was a man of highly refined mind, and possessed a decided taste for music and poetry, although the engrossing nature of the pursuit to which he devoted his whole time, prevented his cultivating the sister arts. The four lectures which he delivered at the Royal Institution on "The History of Landscape Painting," prove that he has attained considerable proficiency in literary composition.

Constable's last lecture was delivered at Hampstead, on the 25th July, 1836. The subject was Landscape, generally. It was addressed to the Literary and Scientific Institution of that place, and as it contains several important and original remarks, and was, moreover, the last instructions he ever gave on a pursuit to which he had devoted his whole life, we will quote a few of his most striking sentences.

"The difference," said he, "between the judgments pronounced by men who have given their lives to a particular study, and by those who have attended to that study as the amusement only of a few leisure hours, may be thus illustrated. I will imagine two dishes, the one of gold, the other wood. The golden dish is filled with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds, and chains, rings, and brooches of gold, while the other contains shell-fish, stones, and earth. These dishes are offered to the world who choose the first; but it is afterwards discovered that the dish itself is but copper gilt, the diamonds are paste, the rubies and emeralds painted glass, and the chains, rings, &c., counterfeits. In the mean time, the naturalist has taken the wooden dish, for he knows that the shell-fish are pearl oysters and he sees that among the stones are gems, and mixed with the earths are the ores of the precious metals. \* \* \* The young painter who, regardless of present popularity, would leave a name behind him, must become the patient pupil of nature. If we refer to the lives of all who have distinguished themselves in art or in science, we shall find that they have always been laborious. Th

an landscape-painter must walk in the fields with an humble mind. No arrogant man was ever permitted to see nature in all her beauty. If I may be allowed to use a very solemn quotation, I would say most emphatically to the student, 'Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.' The friends of a young artist should not look or hope for precocity. It is often disease only. Quintilian makes use of a beautiful simile in speaking of precocious talent. He compares it to the forward ear of corn that turns yellow and dies before the harvest. Precocity often leads to criticism,—sharp and severe, as the feelings are morbid from ill-health. Lord Bacon says when a young man becomes a critic, he will find much for his amusement, little for his instruction. The young artist must receive with deference the advice of his elders, not hastily questioning what he does not yet understand, otherwise his maturity will bear no fruit. The art of seeing nature is a thing almost as much to be acquired as the art of reading the Egyptian hieroglyphics. 'The Chinese have painted for two thousand years, and have not discovered that there is such a thing as *chiaro-scuro*.' But the great beauty of Constable's lectures was, they were suited to the audience, and applicable to the circumstances under which they were delivered. Even his own notes cannot convey to his readers any of the charm of his musical voice, or of the beautiful manner in which he read his quotations, whether of prose or of poetry. The play of his expressive features added to the effect of his eloquence, and impressed upon his audience the wisdom of his instructions.

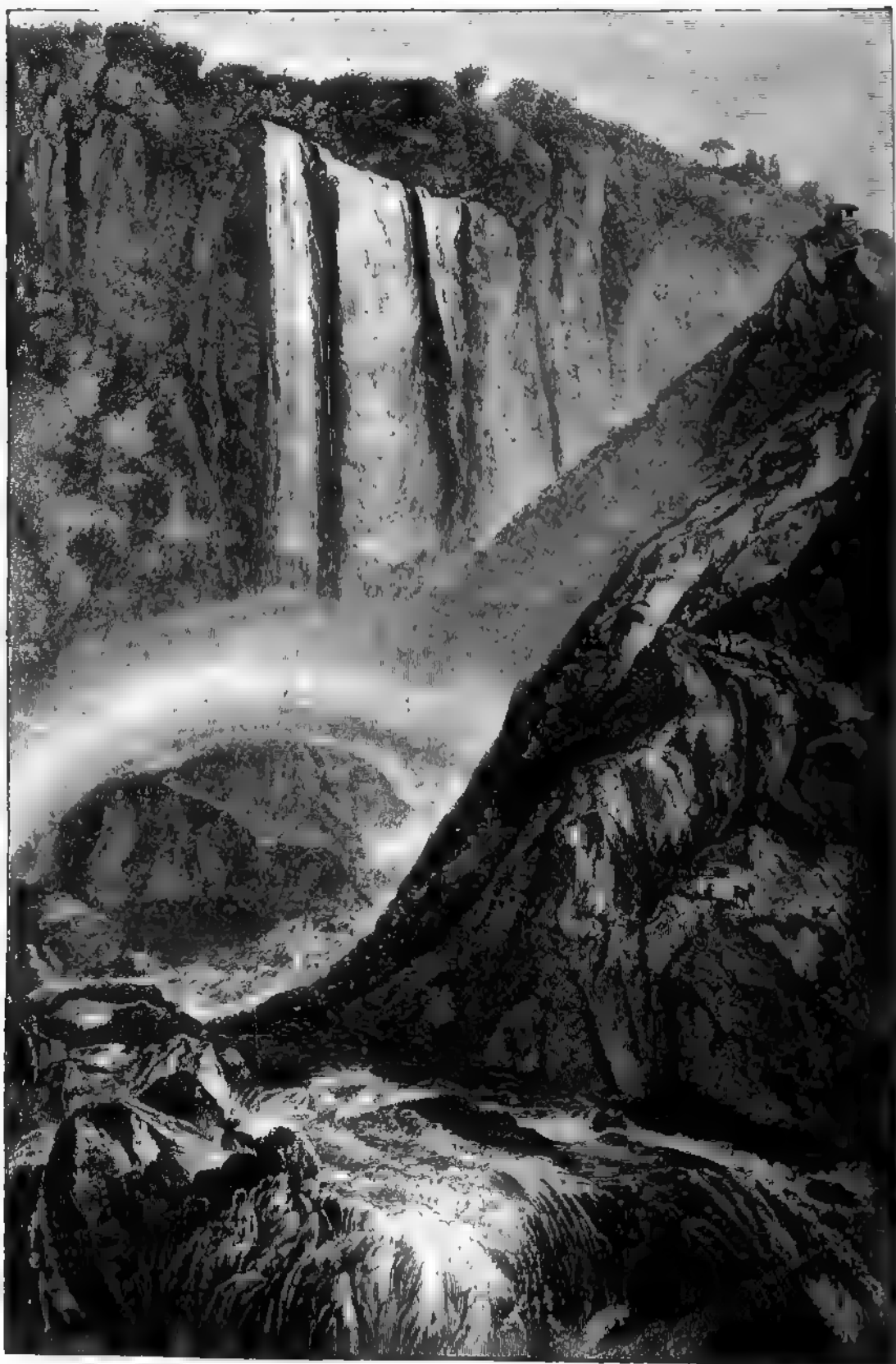
## J. M. W. TURNER, R.A.



ALL the landscape painters of modern times, Turner is, perhaps, the man whose productions have been the subject of the greatest controversy—of the most prejudiced criticism, on the one hand, and of the most exaggerated panegyric, on the other.

The pre-Raphaelite school, with Ruskin as their spokesman, have raised Turner on a pinnacle, from whence he looks down on Claude Lorraine, De Wint, and Constable. Our readers will judge of the degree to which this Turner-worship has been carried by the following quotation from that part of Ruskin's "Modern Painters" entitled "Finish." Discussing the merit of what he calls "ineffable organic beauty," Ruskin remarks: "How far Turner followed it, is not easily shown; for his finish is so delicate as to be nearly uncopyable. I have just said it was not possible to finish that ash-trunk of his (alluding to a sketch of an ash) farther on such a scale. By using a magnifying glass, and giving the same help to the spectator, it might, perhaps, be possible to add and exhibit a few more details; but even as it is, I cannot by line engraving express all that there is in that piece of tree-trunk on the same scale. I have, therefore, magnified the upper part of it, so that the reader may better see the beautiful lines of curvature into which even its slightest shades and spots are cast. (Ruskin illustrates his remark with the engraving of the upper part of Turner's tree magnified.) Every quarter of an inch of Turner's drawings will bear magnifying in the same way. Much of the finer work in them can hardly be traced, except by the keenest sight, until it is magnified. In his painting of 'Ivy Bridge' the views are drawn on the wings of a butterfly, not above three lines in diameter; and in one of his smaller drawings of 'Scarborough,' in my own possession, the mussel shells on the beach are rounded, and some shown as shut, some as open, though none are as large as one of the letters of this type; and yet this is the man who was thought to belong to the 'dashing' school, literally because people have not patience or delicacy of sight enough to trace his endless detail."

Those of our readers who are at all acquainted with Turner's later productions, will perceive that there is in this a degree of Turner-worship almost amounting to superstition, and difficult to reconcile with the otherwise clear and artistic view which Ruskin takes of modern painters. That Turner was an artist of original genius, and that even his most carelessly executed pieces prove the fact, no one is



CASCADE OF TRESSI. FROM A PAINTING BY J. M. W. TURNER, R.A.





ARTUS AND ALONIA. FROM A PAINTING BY J. M. W. TURNER, R.A.

(as appearing by Willmet, R.I.E. in the Art Treasures Exhibition.)

now disposed to doubt; but that his *chefs-d'œuvre* are either more true to nature, more artistic, or more pleasing than those of Claude Lorraine, Constable, or De Wint, Mr. Ruskin will find as difficult to prove as that Tennyson and Browning are greater poets than Pope, Byron, Campbell, or Scott.

JOSEPH MALLORD WILLIAM TURNER, whose bequest to the country of some of his finest masterpieces has so greatly enriched our national collection of pictures, was sprung from the lower ranks of the people. His father was a hair-dresser by trade, and the artist was born in a mean little dwelling in Maiden-lane, Covent Garden, some time in the spring of the year 1775.

We possess but few details of his early history, for the habits of the man were so reserved and uncommunicative, that his biographer has to trust rather to hearsay and probabilities than to any authentic sources for his information. We are told that the first indication he gave of any decided talent for drawing was in copying very correctly the lion which formed part of an emblazoned coat-of-arms which he saw lying on a table in the house of a gentleman where his father was occupied in the duties of his calling.

The praise awarded to his lion encouraged him to make further efforts, and from copying drawings he soon took to copying nature. For this purpose he made frequent excursions into the fields about London, which some sixty or seventy years ago offered many more attractions to the landscape-painter than they do at the present time. His father, who, although a hair-dresser, was a man of reason and discernment, offered no resistance to his son's inclinations.

His proficiency in drawing was soon a source of profit to him. A mezzotint engraver recognising his skill, employed him to colour prints for him at so much a piece. A short time afterwards, we hear of him as a teacher of drawing in schools at five shillings a lesson, and as his reputation among his pupils rose, he was able to increase his charge to ten shillings, and finally to a guinea an hour. He also entered into engagements with publishers to illustrate their works, and during an excursion which he made to Oxford he was employed by the proprietors of the "Oxford Almanack" to make views, which he drew so well that they attracted the notice of many of the most distinguished members of the University.

At the early age of thirteen he entered as a student of the Royal Academy, and in two years contributed a picture, called the View of the Archbishop's Palace at Lambeth, which was accepted and exhibited. It was a water-colour drawing.

In the course of ten years from the date of his admission, he exhibited no less than fifty-nine pictures, and in the year 1800 he was elected as an associate. It is to this part of his life that Ruskin alludes when he says that "Turner having suffered under the instruction of the Royal Academy, had to pass nearly thirty years of his life in recovering from its consequences. From the beginning he was led into constrained and unnatural error; diligently debarred from every help to success. The one thing which the Academy ought to have taught him, viz, the simple and safe use of oil colours, it never taught him; but it carefully repressed his perceptions of truth, his capacities of invention, and his tendencies of choice. It was impossible for him to do right but in a spirit of defiance; and the first condition of his progress in learning was the power to forget. The history and poetry which he studied at the age when the mind receives its dearest associations were accounts of the gods and nations long ago, and his models of sentiment and style were the last wrecks of the Renaissance affectations.

"Therefore (though utterly free from affectation), his early works are full of an enforced artificialness, and of things ill-done and ill-conceived, because foreign to his own instincts, and throughout life whatever he did because he thought he ought to do it was wrong; all that he planned on any principle, or in supposed obedience to canons of taste, was false and abortive: he only did right when he ceased to reflect; was powerful only when he made no effort, and successful only when he had taken no aim.

"And it is one of the most interesting things connected with the study of his art, to watch the way in which his own strength of English instinct breaks gradually through fetter and formalism. How from Egerian wells he starts away to Yorkshire streamlets. How from Homeric rocks, with laurels at the top and caves at the bottom, he climbs at last to Alpine precipices, fringed with pine and fortified with the slopes of their own rivers. And how from Temples of Jupiter and Gardens of the Hesperides a spirit in his feet guides him at last to the lonely arches of Whithy, and bleak sands of Holy Isle."

## "THE CASCADE OF TERNI."

In this beautiful Italian view we see an illustration of the truth of Ruskin's criticism. Before Turner could have contrived to represent the basin of the fall so blue and dim as we see it, and arched by a rainbow, he must effectually, although, perhaps, unconsciously, have emancipated himself from the iron bondage of routine. He has not followed, in the masterpiece from which our engraving is copied, the example of his predecessors, in making the water of the cascade an active agent in its own descent. Water may leap with a springing, parabolic curve over a stone; but it tumbles down a fall like any *other dead, heavy weight*. When, however, the motion of the element has been accelerated by tumbling *down a precipice*, it leaps over the first obstacle it meets, and again over the second with increased *momentum*; but when it commences its onward course in the bed of a river, it has none of the impulse *which enables it to bound over impediments*; but gurgling round the rocks or stones in its path, it rests in the *alternate hollows*, and then again continues its journey.

The success of *Turner's* early pictures gave him the means of travelling, and thus of profiting by the study of the *productions of the great masters of the Dutch and Italian schools of landscape*. "The Dutch school," as Ruskin remarks, "was more or less natural; the Italian, more or less elevated, but absurd. *There was,*" adds the author of "Modern Painters," "a certain foolish elegance in Claude, and a dull dignity in Gaspar Poussin; but then their work resembled nothing that ever existed in the world. On the contrary, a canal or cattle piece of Cuyp's had many beauties about it, but they were at best truths of the ditch and dairy." Between absurdity and vulgarity, therefore, Turner had to steer his way by the *light of his own genius*, and create the only true school of landscape which had yet existed. "If we look for life," says Ruskin, "we must pass from the last landscape of Tintoret to the first of Turner."

## "ARGUS AND ADONIS."

In this landscape we see the proof of the just appreciation Ruskin had formed of Turner's powers. The composition of the picture is in Claude Lorraine's style, for his mind had been warped by the facilities of his celebrated predecessor's conceptions; but much as he was weakened or corrupted by the study of the *Claudesque* landscape, and lifeless, conventional, and even foolish as are his compositions when he is *working according to rule*, he becomes at once noble and inspired when Nature in all her majesty overpowers the reminiscences of his master. The mannerism which is observable in the painting from which our engraving is taken, and which may be traced in all of our artist's productions, was attributable more to the study of Claude than to the influence of Gaspar or Nicolo Poussin. Nicolo Poussin might have given life to the Italian school of landscape, had not his Roman education obstructed his progress. He had great powers of design, and much originality of style; but his imitators who adopted his manner had neither his skill nor his invention, and the Italian landscape in consequence *linguished and expired*. But from the Dutch masters, Cuyp, De Hooche, and Rembrandt, Turner learnt much which neutralised the idealisms of Claude. He painted many pieces in imitation of these masters. His studies of Dutch boats in calm weather and smooth water rival the best productions of Cuyp, and are noble and healthy pieces.

## "KIRKSTALL ABBEY."

The subject of the painting from which our engraving is copied belonged to the order of the Benedictine Monks, and was founded in 1157, by Henry de Lacy, a Norman knight. It stood on the banks of the Aire, amid scenery wild and picturesque. The landscape is in Turner's best style. It has many of the beauties of Claude, with very few of his defects. At first Turner had found it impossible to imitate the sunshine, which he loved for its own sake. Other things he managed with less technical difficulty, but the golden haze, so beautifully pictured in "Kirkstall Abbey," was for a long time a mystery in the art of painting which he admired in Claude, but could not imitate. He never quite fathomed the secret of Claude's way of laying on his oil colour, and this may probably be owing to the fact that certain principles useful in the management of paint, of which we are now ignorant, had been handed down to Claude from the Venetians. Turner, however, after much attentive study and deep reflection, discovered a manipulation of his own, which enabled him to produce effects of light almost as good as those he admired in Claude.

Turner was naturally active and industrious, habitually an early riser, and enthusiastically devoted to his profession. It is not, therefore, surprising that, in the course of a long life, he painted more pictures than any artist of his time.

The space we are able to devote to one master will not allow of our giving more than a limited number of specimens; but, in addition to those *chef-d'œuvre* from which our engravings are taken, the following paintings are justly celebrated:—"Echo," "Evening," "The Thames at Eton," "The Thames



RAIN, STEAM, AND GREAT SMOOKS. FROM A PAINTING BY J. M. W. TURNER, R.A.

at Windsor," "The Manchester Canal," "Petworth Park," "Brighton Pier," "Tabley House and Lake," "The Gale at Sea," "The Festival at the Opening of the Vintage at Marva," "William III. landing at Torbay," "Stonehenge," &c. &c.

In the Art Treasures Exhibition the paintings by Turner, contributed by various noblemen and gentlemen, are very numerous. "Pluto carrying away Proserpine," contributed by John Chapman, Esq.; "Dunstanborough Castle," by T. Birchall, Esq.; "Wreck of the Minotaur," by the Earl of

borough; "Cologne—the Arrival of a Packet Boat," by John Naylor, Esq.; "Sunrise—Mouth of the Thames," by William Wells, Esq.; "Dolbadarn Castle" (Turner's diploma picture, exhibited 1829), by the Royal Academy; "Saltash," by J. Miller, Esq.; "Highland Bridge," by ditto; small piece, by Miss B. Coutts; "River Scene—Fishermen," by Sir P. M. De Grey Egerton; "Barnes race, on the Thames," by Samuel Ashton, Esq.; "Coast Scene," by F. T. Rufford, Esq.; "Walton dge, on the Thames," by J. Gillott, Esq.; "Henley House, on the Thames," by J. Miller, Esq.; "an Tromp," ditto; "Tabley Lake and Tower," by Lord De Tabley; "Sun rising through Vapour," John Chapman, Esq. The engravings from his pictures are also numerous.

We have been thus particular in enumerating these *chefs-d'œuvre*, because the recent criticisms on our artist's works by the author of "Modern Painters," and the magnificent bequest to the country of his gallery of paintings, have made Turner an object of great national interest.



MOUTH OF THE HUMBER. FROM A PAINTING BY J. M. W. TURNER, R.A.

Notwithstanding his acknowledged genius and his brilliant success, Turner had few friends. He was so reserved in his manners, and threw, moreover, such a veil of mystery over all his proceedings, that intimacy with him was almost an impossibility. His great anxiety seems ever to have been to conceal the means by which he produced his wonderful effects. He never would suffer any one to enter his studio; and at Petworth, while on a professional visit, he kept the door closed against every one but Lord Egremont himself. Chantry, however, who had bribed a servant to tell him the secret *signe*, or peculiar knock, by which his lordship signified his presence, managed by imitating it to obtain admittance; and we have been told that it was a long time before Turner would forgive the painter for the *ruse* he had so successfully practised upon him. He was most reserved on the subject of his age and birthday, and never would consent to have his likeness taken, except on one occasion, when, quite a young man, he sat for one of a series of portraits of members of the Royal Academy. In appearance he was coarse and ungainly, and no one unacquainted with his extraordinary genius could have guessed that so rough an exterior could conceal such a mine of intellectual wealth.

His later works have been the subject of much criticism on account of their indistinctness ; but the best judges of art discover in them excellencies which are imperceptible to the uninitiated eye.

Of his magnificent bequest to the nation, now exhibited in the Vernon Gallery, the most remarkable are "The Téméraire towed to her last Berth," "The Death of Nelson," "The Burial of Wilkie," and "The Frosty Morning." He was extremely parsimonious in his way of living ; and amassed in consequence, during his long, successful, and active life, a sum exceeding £100,000. He died on the 23rd of December, 1851, in an obscure lodging in Chelsea, where, for some reason which none can appreciate, he had long lived in obscurity under a feigned name.

By his will, he directed that the whole of his property should be expended in the erection of almshouses for the benefit of unfortunate and meritorious artists, with the exception of £1,000, which was to be set apart for a monument to be raised to his own memory in connection with the almshouses.

He was buried on the 30th of December, 1851, in St. Paul's Churchyard, by the side of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and close to Barry and Sir Christopher Wren.

#### "THE MOUTH OF THE HUMBER."

The striking and highly finished painting from which this engraving is copied, illustrates the truth of many of Ruskin's remarks upon Turnerian topography. "I think I shall be able to show," he says, "that whenever Turner really tried to compose and make modifications of his subjects on principle, he did wrong and spoiled them ; and that he only did right in a kind of passive obedience to his first vision, that vision being composed primarily of the strong memory of the place itself which he had to draw ; and secondarily, of memories of other places (whether recognised as such by himself or not, I cannot tell), associated in a harmonious and helpful way with the new central thought. This," he tells us, "was the case with Dante, Scott, Turner, and Tintoret. Their imagination consisting not in a voluntary production of new images, but an involuntary remembrance, just at the right moment, of something they had actually seen. \* \* \* Whether this be the case with all inventors or not, it was assuredly the case with Turner to such an extent that he seems never either to have lost or cared to disturb the impression made upon him by any scene, even in his earliest youth. He never seems to have gone back to a place to look at it again, but, as he gained power, to have painted it and repainted it as first seen, associating with it certain new thoughts or new knowledge, but never shaking the central pillar of the old image. How far this manly power itself acted, merely in the accumulation of memories, remains, as I said, a question undetermined ; but, at all events, Turner's mind is not more, in my estimation, distinguished above others by its demonstrably arranging and ruling faculties, than by its demonstrably retentive and submissive faculties ; and the more I investigate it the more this tenderness of perception and grasp of memory seem to me the root of its greatness." "The Mouth of the Humber" was no doubt painted in the way that Ruskin describes. The scene had been lying fallow but not forgotten in Turner's mind, and what we here so much admire in the murky and blackening clouds, the castle and town in the distance, and the last rays of the setting sun streaming through the gathering storm, was "not a voluntary production of new images, but an involuntary remembrance, exactly at the right moment, of something he had actually seen."

#### "FISHING BOAT IN A STORM."

The original is a painting after the manner of Vandervelde, who once had a great reputation for sea pieces. The sea is too gray—the fault of all Turner's seas. The opaqueness of the water is also characteristic of the Dutch painter, whose mannerism he retained to the last, although he greatly improved upon the pooriness of Vandervelde's form of waves by raising their divided surfaces into massive surge, and effecting other changes.

#### TURNER'S MERITS.

Turner was not only an original genius, but he originated a new era in painting. Though he was not himself a disciple of any particular school, from him Pre-Raphaelitism borrows its *distinctness* and characteristic *finish*.

We cannot better explain our meaning than by quoting from "Modern Painters" a short summary of Turner's merits. "He who is closest to nature," says Ruskin, "is best. All rules are useless, all

genius is useless, all labour is useless, if you do not give facts; the more facts you give the greater you are, and there is no fact so unimportant as to be prudently despised, if it be possible to represent it.

"I have heard querulous readers asking 'how it was possible' that I could praise Pre-Raphaelitism and Turner also. From the beginning I have never praised Turner highly for any other cause than that he gave facts more *delicately*, more Pre-Raphaelitically, than other men. Careless readers, who dashed at the descriptions and missed the arguments, took up their own conceptions of the cause of my liking Turner, and said to themselves, 'Turner cannot draw; Turner is generalising, vague, visionary; and the Pre-Raphaelites are hard and distinct. How can any one like both?' But I never said that Turner could not draw. I never said that he was vague or visionary. What I said was that nobody had ever drawn so well—that nobody was so certain, so *unvisionary*—that nobody had ever given so many hard and downright facts. I said he is the only painter who ever drew a mountain or a stone—the only painter who can draw the stem of a tree—the only painter who has ever drawn the sky, previous artists having only drawn it typically or partially, but he absolutely and universally. Note how I have praised him in his rock drawing for not selecting a pretty or interesting morsel here or there, but giving the whole truth with all the relation of its parts. \* \* \*

"Thus, then, all I have said is absolutely consistent, and tending to one simple end. Turner is praised for his truth and finish; Pre-Raphaelitism is praised for its truth and finish; and the whole duty inculcated upon the artist is that of being in all respects as like nature as possible."

Ruskin is undoubtedly a somewhat partial advocate of his favourite master; but his judgment has, in all essential points, been corroborated by the opinion of connoisseurs and the votes of the public.

## RICHARD WILSON, R.A.



RICHARD WILSON, the celebrated landscape painter, was the third son of a Welsh clergyman. On his mother's side, he was descended from the Wynns of Loeswold, a family of great antiquity in the principality of Wales, and who reckoned among their progenitors some of the Silurian kings. The exact date of his birth is unknown; but, according to Wright, who is the only authority we have for our facts, he drew his first breath some time in the year 1713.

Like Reynolds and Gainsborough, he early displayed a taste for art. As a child, he delighted in tracing in rough outline with a burnt stick upon the walls of his father's house the figures of men and animals. We know but little of his history during the many years in which he was struggling into notice. A certain Sir George Wynn, a relation of his mother, recognising in his early efforts the promise of better things, took him to London, and apprenticed him (if we may use the expression) to an obscure portrait painter of the name of Wright. His progress, under such circumstances, was of course slow; and we hear of but few remarkable incidents in his life until, at the age of thirty-five, he was so far distinguished as to be employed to paint a picture of the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York for their tutor, the Bishop of Norwich.

As a portrait painter, however, he had but little chance of achieving any permanent success. His productions in this style have not stood the test of time, and as they are now all forgotten or destroyed, we may fairly presume that they did not much surpass in merit the miserable dubs of the artists of the age. Edwards, indeed, asserts that even in portrait painting he far excelled all his contemporaries, and that "his colouring was in the style of Rembrandt." It was, however, in an entirely different way that he was destined to achieve for himself not merely a national but an European reputation.

Assisted by some little aid from his friends, he managed to accomplish, when about thirty-six years







MORNING. FROM A PAINTING BY RICHARD WILSON, R.A.

all the object to which he had for a long time been devoting the proceeds of his labour—we mean a journey to that favoured land, “the mother of arts and arms.”

In Italy a fortuitous circumstance induced him to change, most suddenly, his whole style of painting. While waiting one morning for Zuccarelli, an Italian artist, under whose auspices he was

improving his knowledge of colouring, he painted the view of the country which he had from the windows of his friend's house, and with such skill and accuracy that Zuccarelli, when his eye lighted upon the performance, was so struck with it, that he advised Wilson to devote himself in future to landscape painting, as that was evidently the style for which he had the greatest natural talent. Vernet, a French painter of eminence, indorsed the judgment of Zuccarelli, and proved the sincerity of his admiration of Wilson's genius by exchanging one of his own best pictures for a landscape painted by the English artist. So liberal indeed was this amiable and celebrated Frenchman in his expressions of commendation, that when English travellers—with that exclusive love which they all have for anything foreign—extolled his productions, he would say, with generous enthusiasm, "Don't talk of my landscapes alone when your own countryman Wilson paints so beautifully."

Wilson's mind had long been unconsciously stored with all the resources of a successful landscape painter. The picturesque scenery of his native glens and mountains were deeply impressed upon his imagination; and by studying the performances and mastering the method of the great masters of their art, he managed to impart to home scenery the beauty and splendour of Italian landscape. His progress was so rapid, and his reputation as a landscape painter of excellence so early acknowledged, that he not only procured purchasers for his pictures, but pupils, who paid for his instructions.

He returned to England after a six years' residence in Italy, conscious of his own powers and fully anticipating a favourable reception from the wealthy patrons of art in his own country.

The genius, however, which is worshipped by posterity, is too often unappreciated in its own time. Wilson, with all the *prestige* of his Italian reputation, and with merits which, among the connoisseurs of a discriminating age, have immortalised his name, was never a favourite with his contemporaries. His "View of Rome," and his picture of "Niobe," were so infinitely superior to the productions of any of the landscape painters of the day, that it was impossible for his brother artists, who envied his talent, to deny their merit. But though success in landscape painting may be more honourable, it is far less profitable than portrait painting. The one appeals only to the taste of the few, the other to the vanity of the many; and Wilson found, to his mortification, that in relinquishing portrait painting, he had given up a certain means of subsistence. For a few of his *chefs-d'œuvre* he obtained purchasers; but the majority of his countrymen had as yet no appreciation of the beauties of landscape, and Wilson was in consequence subjected to the mortification of seeing pictures of exquisite skill and finish exhibited for sale in vain. It was, therefore, with thankful eagerness that he accepted the situation of librarian to the Royal Academy, an institution then in its infancy, and one at whose birth he himself had assisted. The proceeds of the place were small, but still very welcome to a man who, before he could make his art profitable, had to inspire his countrymen with a new taste.

The prejudices in favour of the old style were so great, that Wilson had the pain of witnessing wretched daubs by Barrett and Smith of Chichester (well known artists of his time) painted in the style of a district surveyor, without originality, sentiment, or poetry, sold for extravagant prices, while his own exquisitely conceived and highly-finished productions were without a bidder. Want made him welcome with thankfulness the smallest gratuity, and it is reported that he painted his "Ceyx and Aleyone" for a pot of beer and the remains of a Stilton cheese.

He was often indebted for a dinner to the small advances he obtained from pawnbrokers upon some of his finest paintings, and we know that a certain picture fancier, who had often been a customer, when urged by Wilson to purchase another landscape, took the impoverished artist into his shop-garret, and pointing to a pile of landscapes, said, "Why, look you, Dick, you know I wish to oblige; but see! there are all the pictures I have paid you for these three years."

It is not surprising that Wilson, whose merit society refused to acknowledge, should care but little for society. He had no money to keep pace with the rich, and no patrons among the great and high-born. A few picture fanciers and pawnbrokers were his only customers; and if his house was ill appointed, his dress shabby or neglected, and his manners coarse and repulsive, the fault was more in his circumstances than in himself.

Reynolds, the pampered minion of fortune, the favourite of the fashionable world, hated, envied, and feared him. He not only seized every casual opportunity of depreciating his rival's merit, but even in his presidential lectures he attacked poor Wilson with safe and sly malignity. Speaking of "The Death of Niobe and her Children," one of Wilson's most celebrated *chefs-d'œuvre*, Sir Joshua

says:—"Our ingenious academicians, Wilson, has, I fear, been guilty, like many of his predecessors, of introducing gods and goddesses, ideal beings, into scenes which were by no means prepared to receive such personages. His landscapes were, in reality, too near common nature to admit supernatural objects. In consequence of this mistake, in a very admirable picture of a storm which I have seen of his hand, many figures were introduced in the foreground—some in apparent distress, and some struck dead, as a spectator would naturally suppose, by the lightning, had not the painter, injudiciously, as I think, rather chosen that their death should be imputed to a little Apollo, who appears in the sky with his bent bow, and that these figures should be considered as the children of Niobe. The first idea that presents itself is that of wonder, in seeing a figure in so uncommon a situation as that in which the Apollo is placed; for the clouds on which he kneels have not the appearance of being able to support him."

This criticism betrayed at once ignorance and malignity—ignorance of the mythological requirements of the picture; for as Niobe and her children are on earth, and their destroyer is in heaven, there was nothing out of place or out of character in introducing Apollo in the sky with his bent bow;—malignity, in ignoring the exquisite beauties of the picture, or only damning them with faint praise to dwell upon what he considered its defects. Even had the criticism been just, Reynolds was not the man who was qualified to make it, for his tuft-hunting spirit was constantly prompting him to invest with divine honours the most commonplace mortals if they had but a handle to their names. But Wilson was poor and unappreciated; and Reynolds could, therefore, attack him with impunity. On one remarkable occasion, however, Wilson had his revenge. At a dinner given to the members of the Royal Academy, Reynolds proposed the health of Gainsborough as *the best landscape painter*; to which Wilson added, with that readiness of retort for which he was remarkable, *and the best portrait painter too*. The president, who was much galled by this prompt revenge of his brother artist, pretended that he had not been aware of Wilson's presence. Wilson, however, estimated the apology at its proper value, and received it with a grumble of disapproval.

The landscape painter was, unfortunately for himself, not a conciliatory person. Had he, like many of his contemporaries, condescended to flatter the president and do him homage, Reynolds might have been propitiated; as it was, the two artists were always at variance, and Wilson, being the weaker of the two, had the worst of the strife. Want of success does not improve the temper; and poor Wilson, as he advanced in life, was much soured by disappointment. Still he was courted and loved by those in whose society he took pleasure. He was a constant guest at the house of Sir William Beechey, and although he always declined wine or ardent spirits, he never despised a pot of porter and a toast. He was very abstemious in his meals, but would gladly accept of a glass of beer when he would refuse everything else. His love of truth and detestation of anything approaching to prevarication, often brought him into difficulties. When first he became acquainted with Sir W. Beechey, he inquired, with some anxiety, whether the young ladies of the family drew. "No, sir," answered the knight; "my daughters are musical." Had the Misses Beechey been draughtswomen, he would in all probability have declined the invitation of Sir William, as when drawings were shown him, he scorned to praise when he could not do so conscientiously. Reynolds, on the contrary, made himself everywhere popular by merely saying, "Pretty, pretty," when any sketches were displayed before him, however deficient they might be in merit.

"His process of painting was very simple," says his biographer; "his colours were few; he used but one brush, and worked standing. He prepared his palette, made a few touches, then retired to the window to refresh his eye with natural light, and returned in a few minutes and resumed his labours."

He had a very clear perception of the value which posterity would attach to his masterpieces; and although he seldom spoke of the future, when he did indulge in any prophecy he made use of terms about himself which the world has since ratified. "Beechey," said he, one day, to the king's painter, "you will live to see great prices given for my pictures, when those of Barrett will not fetch a farthing."

Small as was the salary of librarian to the Royal Academy, it rescued Wilson from actual penury. As he advanced in years, he became less particular in his dress and habits. His means were inadequate to the expenses of a whole house, and he therefore retired into a cheap lodging in some obscure part of Tottenham Court Road, where, with a single room for all purposes, an easel, a brush, a hard bed, a chair and table, and his favourite pot of porter, he painted pictures which were to immortalise his name

# JOHN CASELL'S ART TREASURES EXHIBITION.

rich and the powerful, who had not taste or soul to appreciate him, were for ever forgotten. He contemplated, in his present obscurity, on the fame which awaited his memory. As, however, sometimes destitute even of the means of purchasing canvas and colour for his work. A young man of good family, but of slender fortune, had formed a friendship for Wilson. He lent him the means he recognised, and whose profession he wished to follow. Anxious to do the neglected



FROM A PAINTING BY RICHARD WILSON, R.A.  
EVENING.

landscapes painter a service, he recommended him to a lady who was seeking for first-rate pictures to adorn her walls.

The lady, pleased with the specimens she saw of Wilson's genius, commissioned him to paint two pictures, of which she fixed the price, and then took her departure. When the painter came to clear, Wilson said to his young friend, in a desponding tone, "Your kindness is all in vain; I have no means of procuring either canvas or colour." The youth, who, though poor himself, had richly procured for the painter twenty pounds; but, as the story goes, gave up from that day



PORTRAIT OF RICHARD WILSON, R.A.

(From a Painting by Raphael Mengs, contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by Sir W. W. Wynne, Bart.)



becoming an artist, for he said to himself, "If Wilson, with all his genius, is starving, what will become of me?"

Fortune too frequently mocks us with her smiles at a time when we can no longer enjoy them. When the infirmities of old age were creeping upon Wilson—when his sight was beginning to fail—when his skill of touch was forsaking him, and his buoyancy of spirit yielding to the pressure of repeated disappointment—Reynolds turned obliging, and recommended him to a nobleman who gave him an order for two pictures at a really remunerative price.

It is difficult to account for this change in the conduct of the President of the Royal Academy; but it is quite certain that his kindness was of no avail.

"MORNING."

The beautiful picture of "Morning," from which our engraving is copied, is in all its details characteristic of Wilson's style. In the conception of the piece we see how thoroughly he had caught the hue and the character of Italian scenery, and how he had steeped his spirit in its splendour. This glorious landscape seems to be fanned by the pure air, and to sparkle with the dawning rays of an Italian sky. The wooded scenery and the tranquil lake are redolent of the beautiful land from which he drew his inspirations. There is an indescribable tranquillity, a loveliness of repose in this representation of morning which no artist but Wilson could have transferred to canvas. The fowls of the air are, it is true, awake and disporting in the first beams of the rising sun, but there is as yet no human actor in the scene; and if the edifice in the distance had been omitted from the design, this picture might have passed for a representation of the Sixth Morning of the Creation, when the world was as yet tenanted by the inferior animals alone. The beauties of this "Morning" are so many and so captivating that we could never tire of contemplating them.

"EVENING."

The landscape which our engraving represents is scarcely less beautiful or less suggestive than that upon which we have been commenting. The same Italian spirit animates the scene. The glassy stream glows in the light of the setting sun, and the ruins on the banks remind us of those beautiful lines of a poet whose muse delighted in the imagery of the Sunny South.

"There is a temple in ruin stands,  
Fashioned by long-forgotten hands;  
Two or three columns and many a stone,  
Marble and granite, with moss o'ergrown.  
Out upon time! who will leave no more  
Of the things which have been than the things before.  
Out upon time! who for ever will leave  
But enough of the past for the future to grieve  
O'er the things which have been and the things which shall be.  
What we have seen our sons shall see:  
Remnants of things which have passed away,  
Fragments of stone reared by creatures of clay."

Wilson's disappointments had undermined his constitution. His spirit had chafed at the indifference which the age had shown to the genius of which he knew himself possessed; and when, in his sixty-ninth year, he became at last possessed of an independent estate through the death of his brother, his health was too much impaired to permit of his enjoying it. Fortune seemed resolved upon making him what amends she could at the close for the miseries he had endured during the course of his life; but although a vein of lead was discovered on the property shortly after he became possessed of it, his shattered constitution deprived him of the hope of a lengthened enjoyment of any sublunary blessings.

When he called upon Sir William Beechey to inform him of his good fortune, he answered the congratulations of his friend by saying, as he pressed his sides, in a sorrowful tone, "Oh, these back settlements of mine!" The truth is, although his spirits were high, his health was impaired and his faculties were failing. At Colomondie, the place to which he had succeeded through the death of his brother, he was exactly in the position he had so long coveted. The elegant and commodious house he inhabited stood among green hills and old romantic woods. His eyes were delighted by the sight of picturesque rocks, verdant glades, and deep glens; while his ears were greeted by the sound of streams which refreshed and diversified the scene. If happiness could be found in externals, he would have been happy. Relieved from the carking cares of poverty, respected and loved by all who could appreciate the sterling worth of his character, and with the views for ever present to his eyes with which his imagination had been so deeply impressed, even while he was studying in that land which "has the fatal gift of beauty," he had lost the power of enjoyment. The scenes he haunted during the short time he lived to taste the sweets of independence, the stones on which he was wont to sit, the trees which sheltered him from the sun, and the banks along which he sauntered, are still hallowed in the eyes of the peasantry.

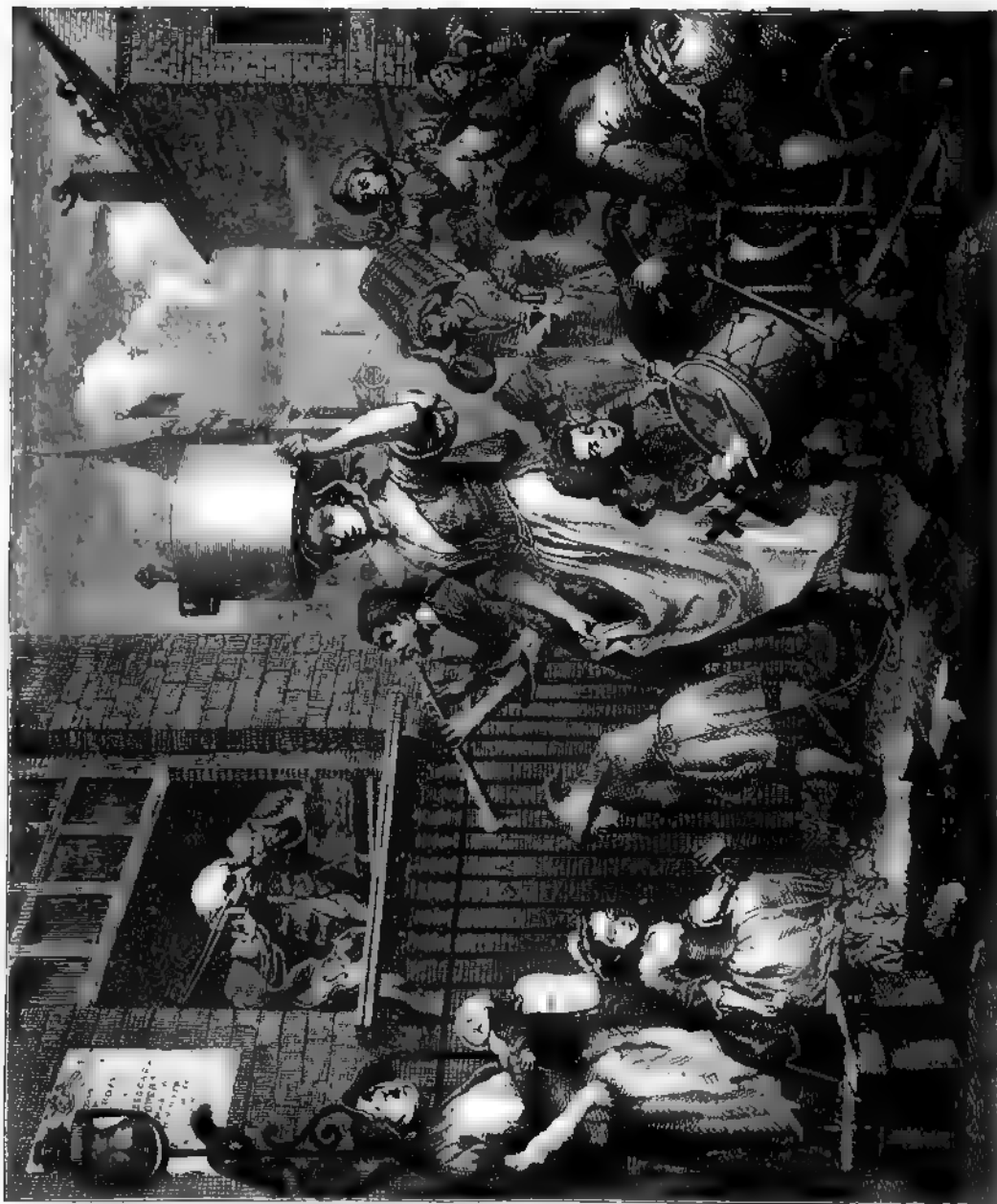
The fountain of life was nearly dry ; and as neither chance nor change can again replenish it when once exhausted, he could only repeat, like Napoleon, the fatal words, "Too late, too late !" One day, while accompanied in his walk by his favourite dog, he suddenly sank down, overpowered with weakness and fatigue. He attempted to rise, but in vain. His canine companion, who was of the kind which seems to be endowed with an intelligence almost human, perceiving the urgency of the case, ran home, howled, whined, tugged the servants by their clothes, and succeeded in bringing them to their helpless master. The shock was, however, mortal ; he rallied a little at first, but as he was unable to take any nourishment, he languished only a few days, overpowered by weakness, wearisomeness, and pain. He expired some time in May, 1782, in the sixty-ninth year of his age.

#### WILSON'S MERITS.

The great merit of Wilson is that he unites in his landscapes the characteristics of the mediæval and the modern styles. He has *stability*, *definiteness*, and *luminousness* ; and yet his conceptions are noble, and his execution is vigorous and glowing. Though he does not, like the mediæval artist, imprison himself in castles or behind fosses, and draw brickwork neatly and beds of flowers primly, he always draws everything with as much precision as if he belonged to the mediæval school. Leaf or stone, or animal or insect, is traced with care and clearness, and all its essential character shown. But although his conceptions are as bold, and his love of liberty, mountain peaks, promontories, crags, rocks, streams, and torrents, as great as that of any painter of modern landscape, he has never sacrificed truth, beauty, and precision to a morbid craving after effect.

The difference between the mediæval and the modern school of landscape Ruskin thus describes :— "Whereas a mediæval paints his sky bright blue, and his foreground bright green, gilds the towers of his castles and clothes his figures with purple and white, we paint our sky gray, our foreground black, and our foliage brown, and think that enough is sacrificed to the sun in admitting the dangerous brightness of a scarlet cloak or a blue jacket. These," he continues, "are, I believe, the principal points which would strike us instantly if we were ever to be brought suddenly into an exhibition of modern landscapes out of a room filled with mediæval work. It is evident that there are both evil and good in this change ; but how much evil or how much good we can only estimate by considering what are the real roots of the habit of mind which have caused them." "The artist who has real invention," says Ruskin, in another part of his "Modern Painters," "sets to work in a totally different way from the disciple of Routine. First, he receives a true impression from the place itself, and takes care to keep hold of that as his chief good ; indeed, he needs no care in the matter, for the distinction of his mind from that of others consists in his instantly receiving such sensations strongly and being unable to lose them ; and then he sets himself as far as possible to reproduce that impression on the mind of the spectator of his picture. Now observe this impression on the mind never results from the mere piece of scenery which can be included within the limits of the picture. It depends on the temper into which the mind has been brought, both by all the landscape round and by what has been previously seen in the course of the day ; so that no particular spot upon which the painter's glance may at any moment fall is then to him what, if seen by itself, it will be to the spectator far away. Nor is it what it would be, even to that spectator, if he had come to the reality through the steps which nature has appointed to be the preparation for it, instead of seeing it isolated on an exhibition wall. It is not possible to draw the whole of nature, as in a mirror. Certain omissions must be made, and certain conventionalities admitted in all art, and the choice made by the painter of this or the other fact for representation, his insistence upon this or the other characters in his subject as that which to him is impressive, constitutes, when it is earnest and simple, part of the value of his work." In the possession of these attributes, which Ruskin considers so essential to the success of the painter, our artist is almost unrivalled. If we examine closely the foreground of the painting from which our engraving of "Morning" is copied, we shall see that Wilson has represented, with the faithful accuracy of the pre-Raphaelites, every stone, every stem, every leaf, every blade of grass, and, in fact, every object in nature, however minute and apparently unimportant. And, in this respect, Wilson stands almost alone ; for his finish is as accurate and as critical as that of any mediæval artist, while the effects he produces are as grand, majestic, and free as those which distinguish any modern

landscape. "He rose at once," says his biographer, "from the tame insipidity of common scenery into natural grandeur and magnificence: his streams seem all abodes for nymphs, his hills are f haunts for muses, and his temples worthy of gods. His whole heart was in his art, and he talked an

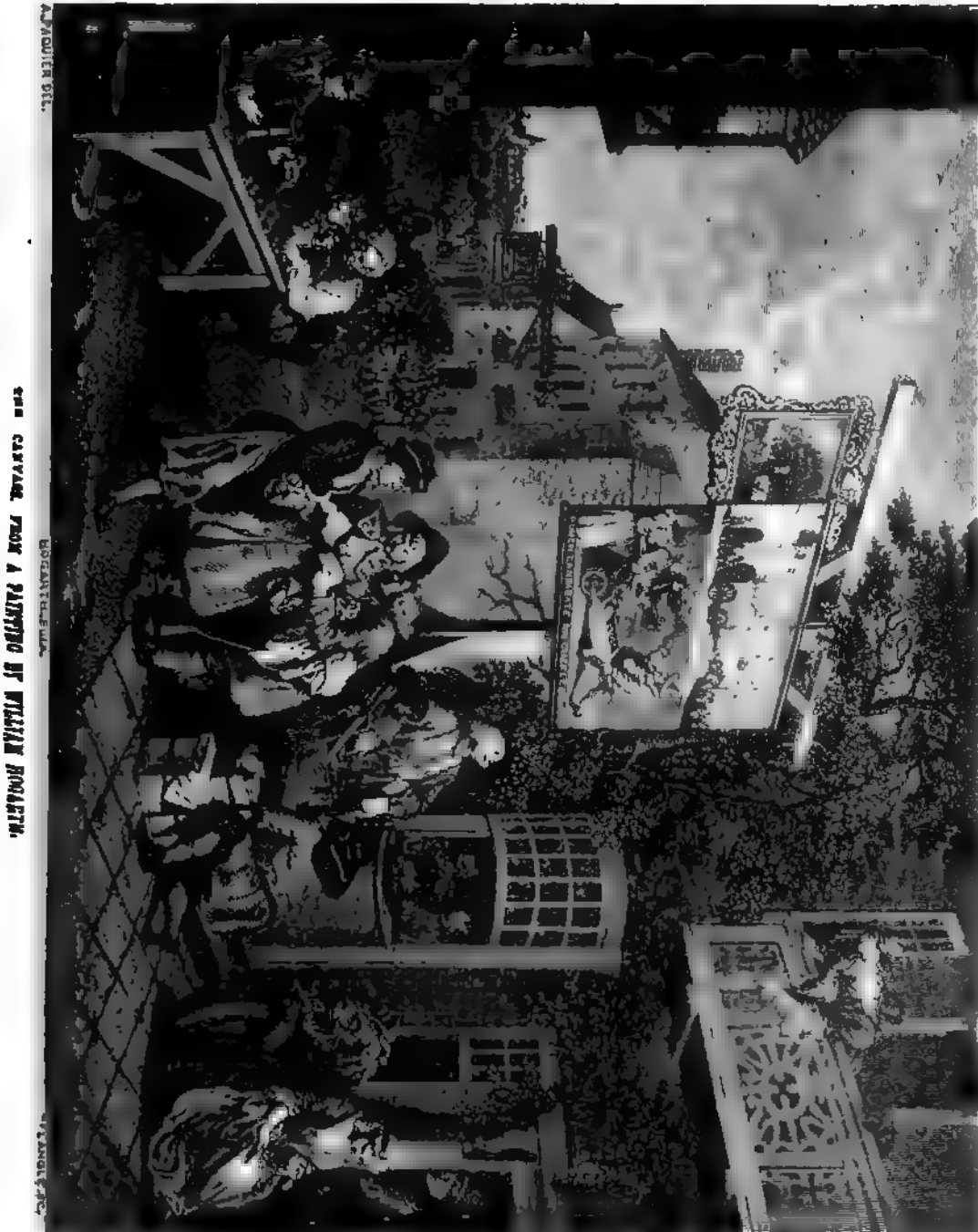


dreamed landscape. He looked on cattle as only made to form groups for his pictures, and on men as they *composed* harmoniously."

Fuseli, whose name as a connoisseur and critic stood high some fifty years ago, in a discourse upon art, delivered in 1801, remarks of Wilson :—"That he observed nature in all her appearances, and had a characteristic touch for all her forms. But though in effects of dewy freshness and silent evening lights few have equalled and none have excelled him, his grandeur is oftener allied to terror, bustle, and



confusion than to calmness and tranquillity. He is now numbered with the classics of the art, though a little less than the fifth part of a century has elapsed since death relieved him from the apathy of



*cognoscenti*, the envy of rivals, and the neglect of a tasteless public ; for Wilson, whose works will soon command prices as proud as those of Claude, Poussin, or Elzheimer, resembled the last most in his fate, and lived and died nearer to indigence than ease."

## HIS PORTRAIT.

In person, Wilson was tall and stout. His head was large, and his face, which had a somewhat purple efflorescence, was occasionally covered with blotches. He was fond, when in the prime of life, of fine clothes and gay company, and when his means allowed of the expense, he aped the fashions of the time. He was a worshipper of truth in everything, not only in his landscapes, but in his life. Flattery he detested; but he relished a joke and delighted in fun and frolic. Our engraving is copied from a painting by Raphael Mengs, contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by Sir W. W. Wynn, Bart.

## HIS MASTERPIECES.

His landscapes, which are very numerous, are scattered throughout the public galleries and private collections of the kingdom. The most celebrated are "The Niobe," contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by Wynn Ellis, Esq. (there are no less than five copies of "The Niobe"); "Cicero at his Villa," contributed by the same proprietor; "Rome, with St. Peter's," contributed by the Earl of Dartmouth; "Vale of Llangollen," by Edward Lloyd, Esq., &c. &c.

---

WILLIAM HOGARTH.

---



**S**ATIRE is more powerful than severity, and vice sinks abashed more often from the one than the other. Of all the satirists of modern times there is not one who has waged a more incessant and more triumphant war with the follies and frailties of a vicious age than William Hogarth, whose masterpieces are perhaps more original in conception, more witty and humorous in style, and more perfect in execution, than those of any other satirical painter of any age or country. His productions have so greatly enhanced the artistic fame of the English nation, with whom he is deservedly popular, and he is so numerously represented in the contributions to the Art Treasures Exhibition, that we

shall make no apology for dwelling at some length upon the incidents of his life.

He was the scion of a family of the name of Hogard, Hogart, or Hogarth, of Kirby-Thore, in the county of Westmoreland; and Richard Hogarth, the father of the painter, was the youngest of three brothers,—the sons of an hereditary freeholder of small property in the Vale of Bampton. That Richard was intended for a learned profession is clear from the fact of his being educated at St. Bees, from whence he migrated to London with the view of turning his acquirements to some profitable account. He lived, however, in an age when it was impossible for any one, however great his talent, to succeed in literature without the aid of patronage; and as Richard Hogarth could not reckon a lord among his acquaintances, he made but little way in a tuft-hunting metropolis. He was first employed as a corrector of the press, and afterwards kept a school in Ship-court, Old Bailey; but without friends or patrons his learning and industry were of no avail, and he sunk under the pressure of repeated disappointment, leaving one son, William, the subject of our memoir, and two daughters, Ann and Mary, to bewail his untimely loss.

That he was a man of indefatigable perseverance, and that he deserved a very different fate, the account given by the artist, his son, of his published and unpublished works, sufficiently proves. "Those who know," to use the words of a French writer of great experience, "how much of labour and thought the smallest work has cost its author, even upon a superficial subject," will feel for the disappointments of Richard Hogarth. After spending years of toil upon a volume of four hundred pages, intended as an addition to Littleton's Latin Dictionary, and after having obtained "testimonials to its practical usefulness from some of the greatest scholars in England, Scotland, and Ireland," he could not prevail upon any of "the brothers of the Row" to undertake the publication. In his

"Grammar Disputations" he was more fortunate, but the work, although of acknowledged merit, never conciliated by any extraordinary success the favour of printers and publishers.

The disappointments of the father were a warning to the son, who, "seeing," to borrow his own words, "the difficulties under which scholars laboured, the many inconveniences they endured, from their dependence on their pen, and the cruel treatment they met with from booksellers and printers," took warning by their misfortunes. "I had constantly," he continues, "before my eyes the precarious situation of men of classical education; it was, therefore, conformably to my own wishes, that I was taken from school, and served a long apprenticeship to a silver-plate engraver." The name of this artist was Ellis Gamble.

Hogarth has not told us at what age he commenced his apprenticeship, but he gives us the following interesting account of his proceedings at school:—"As I had naturally a good eye and fondness for drawing, *shows* of all sorts gave me uncommon pleasure when young, and mimicry, common to all children, was remarkable in me. An early access to a neighbouring painter drew my attention from play, and I was at every possible opportunity employed in making drawings. I picked up an acquaintance of the same turn, and soon learnt to draw the alphabet with great correctness. My exercises, when at school, were more remarkable for the ornaments which adorned them, than for the exercise itself. In the former I soon found that blockheads with better memories would surpass me; but for the latter I was particularly distinguished." With the instinctive perception of genius, Hogarth soon discovered that copying heraldic monsters for his master, the silver-plate engraver, was not the department of art for which nature had intended him. "Engraving on copper," he says, "was, at twenty years of age, my utmost ambition. To attain this, it was necessary that I should learn to draw objects something like nature instead of the monsters of heraldry, and the common methods of study were much too tedious for one who loved his pleasure and came so late to it; for the time necessary to learn in the usual mode would leave me none to spare for the ordinary enjoyments of life. This led me to considering whether a shorter road than that usually travelled was not to be found. The early part of my life had been employed in a business rather detrimental than advantageous to those branches of the art which I wished to pursue and have since professed. I had learned by practice to copy with tolerable correctness in the ordinary way, but it occurred to me that there were many disadvantages attending this method of study, as having faulty originals, &c., and even when the pictures or prints to be imitated were by the best masters, it was little more than pouring water out of one vessel into another."

Hogarth was *par excellence* an original genius; so original, indeed, that he thought copying other men's works a servile occupation, and wholly unworthy an artist of real talent. The course of reasoning by which he arrived at this conclusion is as characteristic of the man as his peculiar style of painting was of the artist. "Many reasons led me to wish," says he, "that I could find the shorter path—fix forms and characters in the mind—and *instead of copying* the lines, try to read the language, and, if possible, find the grammar of the art, by bringing into one focus the various observations I had made, and then trying, by my power on the canvas, how far my plan enabled me to combine and apply them to practice. For this purpose I considered what various ways and to what different purposes the memory might be applied, and fell upon one most suitable to my situation and idle disposition; laying it down first as an axiom, that he who could by any means acquire and retain in his memory perfect ideas of the subjects he meant to draw, would have as clear a knowledge of the figure as a man who can write freely hath of the twenty-five letters of the alphabet and their infinite combinations."

He did not waste his time, fritter away his opportunities, or endanger the originality of his style by copying masterpieces conceived and executed in quite a different school of art to that for which he was by nature best suited. "Instead of burdening the memory," says he, "with musty rules, or tiring the eye with copying dry or damaged pictures, I have ever found studying from nature the shortest and safest way of obtaining knowledge in my art. A choice of composition was the next thing to be considered, and my constitutional idleness naturally led me to the use of such materials as I had previously collected; and to this I was further induced by thinking that, if properly combined, they might be made the most useful to society in painting, although similar subjects had often failed in writing and preaching."

Although many of Hogarth's contemporaries have agreed in representing him as a man of gross

conversation and an unlettered mind, there can be little doubt that, however indifferent may have been his proficiency in classical literature, his mind was well stored with that knowledge which is derived from men and not from books—from observation and not from study—a knowledge far more valuable in his vocation than the poetry, philosophy, and history of the whole Greek and Roman repertoire. The poverty of his parents had prevented his enjoying the advantages of a University



JELAUGLE SC

HOGARTH FUG.

MARIAGE À LA MODE—NO. 1. FROM A PAINTING BY WILLIAM HOGARTH.

PAQUER DEL

education—a *sine qua non* in the eyes of Lord Orford, one of the great literary authorities of the day. A classical training seems indeed to have been a passport quite indispensable in procuring the patronage of the great and the powerful. Hogarth, in his early struggles with the world, felt this. It was long before his talents, great and indisputable as they were, could compensate for a deficiency which exposed him to those charges of ignorance and grossness which Walpole, Ireland, and Nichols bring against him.

We learn from Ireland that he completed the term of his apprenticeship in 1718, when about twenty-one years of age; and as he had in all probability been bound for seven years, he could not have been more than fourteen when he left his father's house—a time of life at which few youths have made much progress in classical literature. The father, therefore, is not to blame if the son was deficient in knowledge of Latin and Greek. That Hogarth's progress was slow is evident from the fact

VARIOUS & LA MOON—NO. 17. FROM A PAINTING BY WILLIAM HOGARTH.



that "The Taste of the Town"—engraved in 1724—was the first work which brought him into public notice. "'The Taste of the Town,'" says Ireland, in speaking of this production, "is now entitled 'The Small Masquerade Ticket,' or 'Burlington Gate,' in which the follies of the town are severely satirised by the representation of multitudes, properly habited, crowding to the masquerade. The leader of the figures wears a cap and bells and a garter round his right leg, while before him a satyr holds a purse containing a thousand pounds—a satirical glance at Majesty. The kneeling figure, pour-

ing eight thousand pounds at the feet of Cuzzoni, the Italian singer, has been said to resemble Lord Peterborough. Opera, masque, and pantomime are in their glory, while the works of our great dramatists are trundled to oblivion on a wheelbarrow. On the summit of Burlington Gate he placed the fashionable artist, William Kent, brandishing his palette and pencils, with Michael Angelo and Raphael for supporters."

We said that this was the first design which brought him into notice, but we have still the names, though nothing more remains of them, of many productions of his of the same time, through the sale of which he managed to maintain himself and assist his mother and sisters.

He derived considerable profit from his illustrations of books; "but," according to Walpole, "no symptoms of his genius dawned in those early plates." "The Hudibras," illustrated by Hogarth in 1726, "was the first work," observes the same author, "that marked him as a man above the common; yet, in what made him then noticed, it surprises me now to find so little humour in an undertaking so congenial to his talents." But although Hogarth had certainly managed to give additional point and application to the witty and graphic satire of Butler, he was still a mere engraver, as the trial, in which an upholsterer of the name of Morris, whom he sued for workmanship and materials, sufficiently proves.

Morris had engaged Hogarth to paint for him a design of the element Earth; but when the work was sent home it was, in the opinion of the foreign tapestry workers whom Mr. Morris employed, not performed in a workmanlike manner, and Mr. Morris in consequence refused to pay for it. The reasons he gave for this refusal, at the trial, we will quote at length, because they show the small estimation in which Hogarth was held at the time. "On learning," says Morris, "that Hogarth was an engraver and not a painter, I became uneasy, and sent one of my servants to him, who stated my apprehensions; to which Mr. Hogarth replied that it was certainly a bold and unusual kind of undertaking, and if Mr. Morris did not like it when finished, he should not be asked to pay for it. The work was completed and sent home, but my tapestry workers, who are mostly foreigners, and some of them the finest hands in Europe, and perfect judges of performances of that nature, were all of opinion that it was not finished in a workmanlike manner, and that it was impossible to execute tapestry by it." Having failed as a tapestry designer, Hogarth betook himself to a pursuit more congenial to his nature and talent.

He was present during the examination of Bambridge, the warder of the Fleet Prison, who, together with Huggins, his predecessor, was accused before a committee of the House of Commons of breaches of trust, extortion, and cruelty. The illustration of this scene by Hogarth is indicative of genius of the highest order. The likeness of the miscreant Bambridge might have stood for that of Iago in the moment of detection. This sketch established Hogarth's reputation as a caricaturist of eminence. He was, however, annoyed at perceiving that artists very inferior to him in genius, but more experienced in the ways of the world, were realising fortunes by portrait painting, while he, by etching and designing satirical scenes of fashionable folly and vice, was scarcely able to emancipate himself from penury and dependence. An inferior artist of the name of Kent, who, in the fourfold capacity of painter, sculptor, architect, and ornamental gardener, had gained a profitable popularity in each department, without having reached even a moderate proficiency in any, was the object of Hogarth's peculiar aversion.

The skill and cleverness with which our artist caricatured a ridiculous altarpiece, painted by Kent for St. Clement's Church, Strand, brought him acquainted with Sir James Thornhill, an architect, who found Kent's multifarious occupations much in his way.

Sir James Thornhill, who had an academy of his own in St. Martin's-lane, admitted Hogarth, in whom he recognised original genius, among the number of his pupils. But Hogarth, instead of profiting by the instruction he received there, wasted his time in arguments with his brother students on the propriety of copying nature herself, instead of studying her through the medium of the productions of others. "The most original mind," said he, "if habituated to *borrowed* postures and academic groups, becomes inoculated with the style of others, and loses the power of stamping a spirit of its own on canvas." The retort of a brother student to this novel and startling hypothesis is very good. "By the doctrine," said he, "which you, Hogarth, preach and practise, it seems that the only way to draw well is not to draw at all; and, I suppose, if you wrote on the art of swimming, you would not permit your scholars to go into the water until they had learnt to swim."

His intimacy with the distinguished architect exercised an important influence over the fortunes of Hogarth, who, on the 23rd of March, 1729, married Jane, the only daughter of Sir James Thornhill. In age they were tolerably well matched, as the bridegroom was in his thirty-second and the bride in her twentieth year; but the marriage took place without the consent of the bride's father, who, as a Member of Parliament and "History Painter to the King," looked for a son-in-law much higher in the social scale than a mere etcher and engraver. For two years the old man was inexorable, but the entreaties of his daughter and the rising reputation of his son-in-law at length reconciled him to what he considered a *mésalliance*.

The increased expenditure of married life obliged Hogarth to humour for a time the prejudices of the age in which he lived, and to give up caricaturing for portrait painting; "an employment," says Walpole, "most ill-suited to a man whose turn was certainly not flattery, nor his talent adapted to look on vanity without a sneer; yet his facility in catching a likeness, and the method he chose of painting familiar pieces in small compass, then a novelty, drew him prodigious business for a time. It did not last, either from his applying to the real bent of his disposition or from his customers apprehending that a satirist was too formidable a confessor for the devotees of self-love."

Hogarth, who never assigned to the productions of this portion of his career the merit they deserve, speaks slightly and disparagingly of his likenesses. "I married," says he, "and commenced painter of small conversation pieces, from twelve to fifteen inches high. This, having novelty, succeeded for a few years. But though it gave somewhat more scope for the fancy, it was still but a less kind of drudgery, and as I could not bring myself to act like some of my brethren, and make it a sort of manufactory, to be carried on by the help of backgrounds and drapery painters, it was not sufficiently profitable to pay the expenses my family required." He has certainly not done himself justice in this account of his success as a portrait painter, but as it was not the style in which he achieved immortality, he seems to regret that he ever wasted any of his time and energies upon it. He was neither a hypocrite nor a flatterer, and as he could not so far falsify nature as to make of mere ordinary men and women gods and goddesses, he could not long compete with rival artists who shared in none of his scruples, but who, without his genius, had a certain power of putting every sitter into good humour by concealing the defects and enhancing the beauties of the likenesses they were taking.

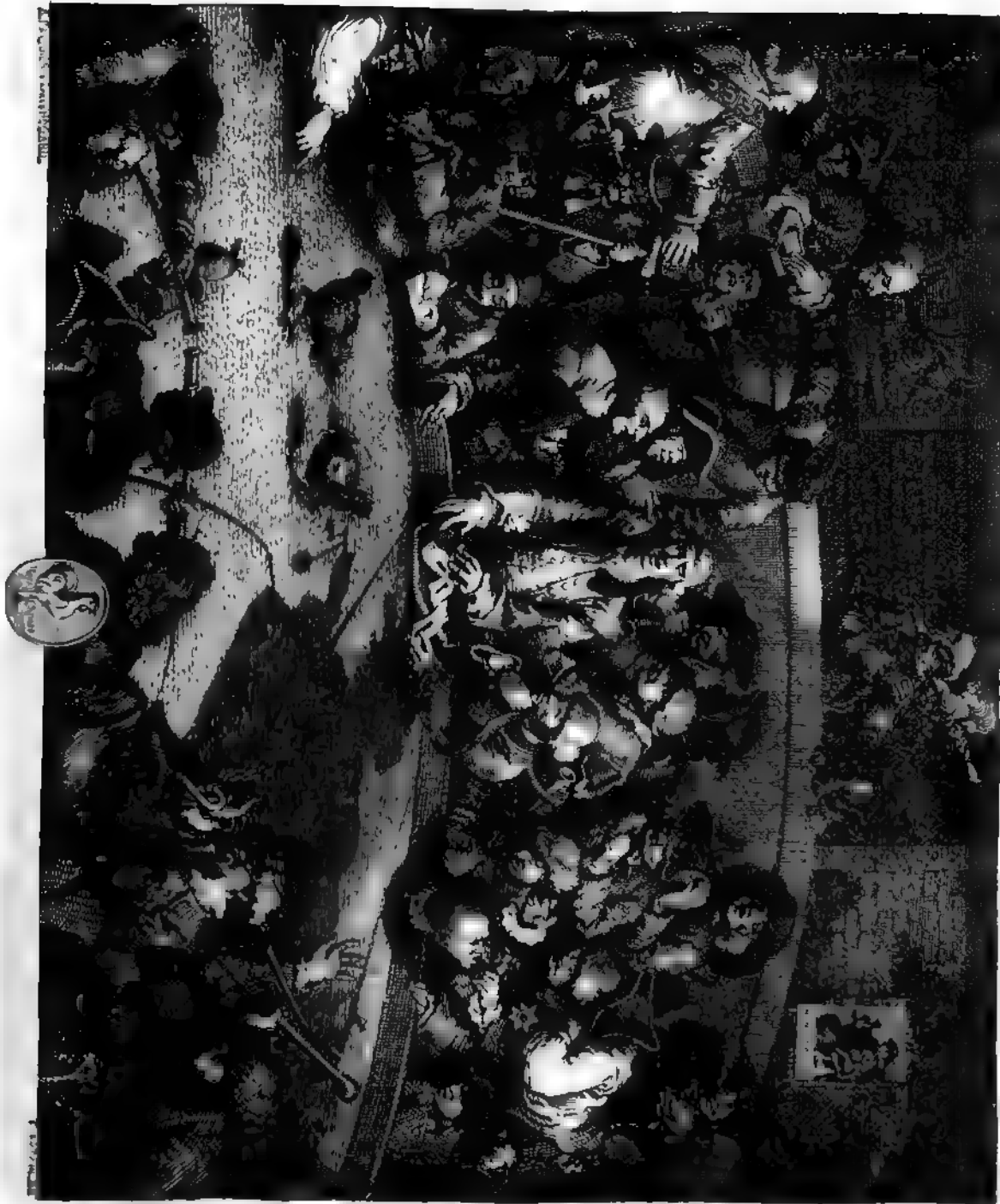
His portraits are very numerous. The most remarkable are those of Mr. and Mrs. Garrick, of Garrick as Richard III., of Henry Fielding, of Captain Coram, and John Wilkes. His family or conversational pieces were also numerous, and so popular that he was often able to obtain the price he asked for them in advance.

His reason for relinquishing the profitable pursuit of portrait painting we will give in his own emphatic language. "For the portrait of Garrick as Richard," he says, "I received more than any English artist ever before received for a single portrait, and that, too, by the sanction of several painters who were consulted about the price. Notwithstanding all this, the current remark was, that portraits were not my province; and I was tempted to abandon the only lucrative branch of the art; for the practice brought the whole nest of phyzmongers on my back, where they buzzed like so many hornets. All those people had their friends, whom they incessantly taught to call my women loose characters, my essay on beauty *borrowed*, and my engraving *contemptible*. This so much disgusted me that I sometimes declared I would never paint another portrait, and frequently refused when applied to; for I found by mortifying experience that whoever will succeed in this branch, must adopt the mode recommended in Gay's fables, and make divinities of all who sit to him. Whether or not this childish affectation will ever be done away is a doubtful question: none of those who have attempted to reform it have yet succeeded; nor unless portrait painters in general become more honest, and their customers less vain, is there much reason to expect they ever will." Acting upon these convictions, Hogarth relinquished for once and for ever the profitable pursuit of portrait painting, which was, as he himself observes, "the only lucrative branch of the art," and put into practice his precepts about copying living nature.

Disgusted with the amount of servility and flattery required in the portrait painter, he determined to follow the bent of his own genius, and, instead of making divinities of mere mortals, to paint folly, vanity, and vice, in all their native hideousness. For this purpose, he frequented the haunts of the







"THE ENRAGED MUSICIAN."

The design of this painting, says Ireland, originated in a story which was told to Hogarth by Mr. John Festin, who is the hero of the print. He was eminent for his skill in playing upon the haut-boy and German flute, and was much employed as a teacher of music. To each of his scholars he

dedicated one hour each day. "At nine o'clock one morning," said he, "I waited upon my Lord Spencer; but his Lordship being out of town, from him I went to Mr. V——n, now Lord V——n. It was so early that he was not risen. I went into his chamber, and, opening a window, sat down on the window-seat. Before the rails was a fellow playing upon the hautboy. A man, with a barrow full of onions, offered the piper an onion if he would play him a tune. That ended, he offered a second for a second tune; the same for a third; and was going on. But this was too much. I could not bear it. It angered my very soul. 'Zounds!' said I; 'stop here! This fellow is ridiculing my profession; he is playing on the hautboy for onions.'"

The author has shown much skill in the grouping of the various characters, whose united efforts in the way of vocalisation, would form a good specimen of that harmonious discord, called the Cries of London. The dustman, the fishmonger, the ballad-singer, the French drummer-boy, the caterwauling of the tabbies, the shout of the chimney-sweep from the pinnacle of his labours, the horn of the postman, the hautboy of the strollers, the grinding of the cutler, &c. &c., must have formed an accompaniment highly gratifying to the ears of the musician.

There is a redundancy of satirical humour in the picture, which is in Hogarth's best style. It was painted in November, 1740, as an advertisement in a number of the *London Daily Post* of that date testifies.

#### "THE CANVASS."

This engraving represents the second scene of a subject divided into four parts: "The Entertainment," "The Canvassing for Votes," "The Polling," and "The Chaining." The open manner in which bribing was carried on in those days is clear, from the fearless effrontery with which the agents of the respective candidates are besetting the freeholder who seems willing to take from each everything he can get, although he is pledged to vote for the heaviest bidder. The design of the picture is admirable in its details. The British Lion, a fragment of the figurehead of a ship, is devouring the *fleur de lis* of France. The landlady of the inn is engaged in the pleasing task of calculating the gain she has already made by the contested election. The stalwart son of Mars who is looking so complacently over her shoulder at the glittering heap she is displaying in her lap will soon, if we may judge from the expression of his face, claim a share of the spoil.

At the rival inn, under the sign of "The Crown," a fierce dispute is going on between the supporters of the different candidates; and a miscreant, mounted on the beam which sustains the insignia of the realm, is, forgetful of the security it affords him, and of the ruin in which its destruction would involve him, endeavouring to saw through the beam which upholds the crown. There are so many other humorous and satirical details in the piece that we cannot sufficiently admire the fertility of the imaginative genius which could have prompted a whole so complete in all its parts.

#### "MARIAGE À LA MODE."—No. I.

This is the first scene in a series of six paintings, intitled the "Mariage à la Mode." Hogarth informed the public of his design in an advertisement, which we copy verbatim from *The London Daily Post* of April 7th, 1745:—"Mr. Hogarth intends to publish, by subscription, six plates, from copper-plates engraved by the best masters in Paris, after his own paintings,—the heads, for the better preservation of the characters and expressions, to be done by the author,—representing a variety of modern occurrences in high life, and called 'Mariage à la Mode.' Particular care is taken that the whole shall not be liable to any exception on account of indecency or inelegancy; and that none of the characters represented shall be personal."

Our engraving describes the antenuptial preparations for the union of the heir of a proud peer with the daughter of a rich merchant. The gouty old father of the bridegroom, inflated with self-sufficiency, is dilating upon the antiquity of his noble descent, and points to the pedigree of his race, which is humorously represented as issuing out of the loins of the first Plantagenet, who is clothed in complete steel. The rich *roturier*, or citizen, who is a thoroughly practical person, gazes with an expression of ridicule upon the man who can pride himself upon anything so unsubstantial as antiquity of descent. He seems, however, to take a real interest in the value of the securities which have been handed to him for

his inspection. The young lord is an excellent specimen of the dandy of the time. His affections, if he have any at all, are certainly not centred in his bride, for he is gazing, not upon her, but upon the reflection of his own face in the glass, with a look which shows plainly how well he is satisfied with his appearance. There is an expression of mortified vanity on the face of the lady, who seems to be revenging the neglect of her "intended" by listening with apparent interest to the whispered admiration of a cunning young lawyer, who makes love to her while he is ostensibly mending his pen. The two pet spaniels who, though chained together, are pulling different ways, foreshadow the fate of the young couple.

The picture has many other details emblematic of the results which may be anticipated from an alliance in which inclination, sympathy, and suitableness are all sacrificed to a foolish desire for wealth on the one hand, and rank on the other.

#### "MARIAGE À LA MODE."—No. II.

The scene represented by this engraving gives us some insight into the progress of the ill-assorted couple. The dissipated young lord, unrestrained by any feelings of esteem or affection for his giddy, vain, and pleasure-seeking bride, squanders the dowry she brought him in the indulgence of his vicious passions. His languid attitude, and listless, *blazé* look, while his wife is giving vent to her rage in the destruction of her china, are a truthful and telling satire upon the generality of matrimonial squabbles. The disorder of the apartments, which, although the hands of the clock point to past one at noon, have not been arranged for the day, are illustrative of the advantage which servants take of the dissipation and dissensions of their masters.

The despairing attitude of the old steward, who, after an unsatisfactory interview, is dismissed by his lord with so many unpaid bills, and one solitary receipt upon his file, is highly dramatic. A pack of cards scattered on the floor, show that my lady has taken to gaming, in order to console herself for the neglect of her husband; and the open book which lies at her feet, is a specimen of the style of reading with which she beguiles her leisure hours and debauches her mind. The whole scene is highly suggestive of the misery and ruin which must shortly overtake the vain and guilty pair. No tragedy or romance was ever conceived so perfect in its details, so graphic, so pathetic, and so circumstantial as the successive scenes of this series. So wonderfully accurate was the knowledge, so abundantly productive was the fancy of Hogarth in his delineations of life, that we might fill volumes with their history, and yet not describe with half the power, pathos, and accuracy which characterise these six scenes, the fate of the hero and heroine of the "Mariage à la Mode."

#### "THE COCK-PIT."

The subjects upon which Hogarth delighted to display his satirical humour were generally of a popular character. We have seen how eloquently and circumstantially he has exposed, in "The Canvass," the corruption of a county election, and in the engraving of "The Cock-pit" we perceive how pointedly and fearlessly he lashes the cruelty and folly of that most barbarous exhibition—a cock-fight. Both cock-fighting and bull-baiting are now luckily out of date; but in Hogarth's time they were amusements so fashionable, that peers and members of Parliament openly countenanced them by their patronage and presence. Hogarth's picture of "The Cock-pit" is a masterpiece of satirical drollery such as no other artist in the world could ever have conceived or executed.

On a platform, evidently designed and built for the brutal exhibition, we see two wretched victims of man's inherent love of cruelty, in the shape of a brace of cocks, furnished expressly with steel spurs, for the purpose of mutual destruction, pitted against each other. The platform is surrounded by a crowd of eager spectators, including gamblers, thieves, swindlers, blacklegs, pick-pockets, and sporting vagabonds of all phases of guilt and depravity. Peers, butchers, bakers, costermongers, rat-catchers, horse-dealers, bird-fanciers, &c. &c., are all huddled together, eagerly betting on the issue of the fight. The figure in the centre is that of Lord Albemarle Bertie, a nobleman whom utter blindness did not disqualify for a prominent place in the cock-pit. He is surrounded by seven kindred spirits, who have simultaneously offered to bet with him upon the issue of the battle. The

miscreant close at his side is subtracting, with considerable dexterity, a bank note from the nobleman's hat. A butcher and a ragged potboy are endeavouring to apprise the noble sportsman, who is far too intent upon the sport and the bets to heed their warning, of the contemplated theft.

The attitude of the French marquis, who may be known by the star on his coat, and who is supposed to be exclaiming in his rage, "*Sauvages! Sauvages!*" is cleverly characteristic of the nation to



ENGRAVED FROM A PAINTING BY WILLIAM HOGARTH.  
(Contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by J. H. Anderson, Esq.)

which he belongs. The noisy eagerness of the assemblage of roughs as the sport proceeds, is so well described by the attitudes of the speakers, that we almost fancy we can catch their words. If satire—wholesome, truthful satire—could have crushed so frightful a custom, this circumstantial picture would have effected Hogarth's object. But he only scotched without killing the snake, for the cruel amusement of cock-fighting continued in vogue for nearly half a century after his death.

## "SIGISMUNDA."

This beautiful engraving is copied from a painting by William Hogarth, contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by J. H. Anderdon, Esq. The picture of "Sigismunda," by Hogarth, was painted for Sir Richard Grosvenor, in the year 1759, and was a copy of a "Sigismunda," imputed to Corregio, which came into the possession of Sir Thomas Sebright, at the sale, in the year 1758, of the collection of pictures belonging to Sir Luke Schaub.

Walpole, who was certainly no friend to Hogarth, assigns the following motives for his copying this remarkable painting. "From a contempt of the ignorant *virtuosi* of the age, and from indignation at the impudent tricks of picture dealers, whom he saw continually recommending and vending vile copies to bubble collectors, and from having never studied—indeed having seen few good pictures of the Italian masters, he persuaded himself that the praises bestowed on those glorious works were



SCENE IN THE HOUSE OF THE ALCHEMIST. FROM THE ILLUSTRATIONS OF "HUDIBRAS," BY WILLIAM HOGARTH.

nothing but the effect of ignorance. He talked this language till he believed it, having heard it often asserted, as is true, that time gives a mellowness to colours and improves them; he not only denied the proposition, but maintained that pictures only grew black and worse by age. He went further—he determined to rival the ancients, and unfortunately chose one of the finest pictures in England as the subject of his competition. This was the celebrated 'Sigismunda' of Sir Luke Schaub, said to be painted by Corregio, probably by Furino, but no matter by whom. It is impossible to see the picture or read Dryden's inimitable tale, and not feel that the same soul animated both. After many essays, Hogarth produced his 'Sigismunda,' but no more like 'Sigismunda' than I to Hercules. Not to mention the wretchedness of the colouring, it was the representation of a maudlin kept mistress just turned off, and with eyes red with rage and usquebaugh, tearing off the ornaments her keeper had given her. To add to the disgust raised by such vulgar expression, her fingers were bloodied by her lover's heart, that lay before her like that of a sheep for her dinner."

The many thousands of our subscribers who will have the opportunity of seeing in the Art Treas-

tures Palace the original of this celebrated picture, will be disgusted at the malice and falsehood of this criticism. John Wilkes, whom Hogarth had cleverly caricatured, in revenge for an attack made upon himself in "The North Briton," had his fling at "Sigismunda." "If the 'Sigismunda,'" says the patriot, "had a resemblance of anything ever seen on earth, or had the least pretence to either meaning or expression, it was what he had seen or perhaps made in real life—his own wife in an agony of passion; but of what passion no connoisseur could guess."

The account which Hogarth, in his own memorandum-book, gives of the whole transaction, is by far the most rational and probable. This transaction, he says, having given rise to many ridiculous falsehoods, the following unvarnished tale will set all in its true light. The picture of "Sigismunda" was painted at the earnest request of Sir Richard Grosvenor, in the year 1759, at a time when Mr. Hogarth had fully determined to leave off painting, partly on account of ease and retirement, but more particularly because he had found by thirty years' experience that his pictures, except in an instance or two, had not produced him one quarter of the profit which arose from his engravings. However, the flattering compliments as well as generous offers made him by the above gentleman, who was immensely rich, prevailed upon the artist to undertake this difficult subject; which (being seen and fully approved of by his lordship whilst in hand) was, after much time and the utmost efforts, finished—but how, the painter's death can only positively determine. The price required for it was therefore not on account of its value as a picture, but proportioned to the value of the time it took in painting. The truth of this statement is further confirmed by a letter addressed to Sir Richard Grosvenor by Hogarth himself, in which he dwells upon these points, and gives the reasons for his charging four hundred pounds for the picture.

The *millionaire*, who, without any genuine taste or generous impulses, wished to establish his reputation as a patron of fine art, sent the following cold and cutting reply to Hogarth's explanatory letter. "I should sooner have answered yours of the 13th instant, but have been mostly out of town. I understand by it that you have a commission from Mr. Hoare for a picture. If he should have taken a fancy to the 'Sigismunda,' I have no sort of objection to your letting him have it; for I really think the performance so striking and inimitable, that the constantly having it before one's eyes would be too often occasioning melancholy ideas to arise in one's mind, which a curtain's being drawn before it would not diminish the least." The truth is that Sir Richard Grosvenor had been influenced by the unfavourable criticism of Walpole, and as he could form no opinion of his own, and was moreover of a mean and overbearing nature, he was anxious to repudiate his bargain.

The picture remained on the painter's hands; and in his dying injunctions to his widow, he begged her not to part with it for less than five hundred pounds. It was, in consequence, not sold till after the death of Mrs. Hogarth, when it was bought by Boydell.

Hogarth, in noticing the annoyance and vexation which the abuse of his "Sigismunda" and the meanness of his patron had occasioned him, remarks, "However mean the vendor of poisons may be, the mineral is destructive; to me its operation was troublesome enough. Ill nature spread so fast that now was the time for every little dog in the profession to bark and revive the old spleen which appeared at the time of the analysis. The anxiety which attends endeavouring to recollect ideas long dormant, and the misfortunes which clung to this transaction (alluding to the 'Sigismunda') coming on at a time when nature demands quiet and something besides exercise to cheer it, added to my long sedentary life, brought on an illness which continued twelve months. But when I got well enough to ride on horseback I soon recovered. This being at a period when war abroad and contention at home engrossed every one's mind, prints were thrown into the background, and the stagnation rendered it necessary that I should do some *timed thing*, to recover my lost time and stop a gap in my income. This drew forth my print of 'The Times,' a subject which tended to the restoration of peace and unanimity, and put the opposers of those humane objects in a light which gave great offence to those who were trying to ferment destruction in the minds of the populace."

"The Times," to which Hogarth alludes, was a print purely political, and therefore only interesting to those whom it concerned. The principal object at which the shafts of its satire were aimed, was Mr. Pitt, afterwards Earl of Chatham, who, although a politician of first-rate ability and of most persuasive eloquence, was, nevertheless, accused of courting the favour of the mob more than was becoming in a man of station and reputation.

## "THE BOWL OF PUNCH."

The painting of which our engraving is a copy was called at the time "Modern Midnight Conversation," and Ireland informs us that most of the persons introduced are the portraits of the notorious characters of the age.

The scene is one of drunken riot and debauch. Around the table some dozen persons have been regaling themselves with brandy punch and strong wine, we say *have been*, for three or four of the number are already *hors de combat*, and are either bodily or mentally incapable of any further excess. Horrible to relate, the high priest of this scene of vice and drunkenness is a dignitary of the Church, who, while the rest of the company, overpowered with the fumes of the potent liquor, are either fallen or falling under the table, survives, amid the general wreck, with powers of mind and body unimpaired. His capacity for drink is so unrivalled, that he sits among his boon companions an illustration of what Thomson would call "the black abyss of drink." Whether the portrait is intended for Henley, who has been so severely lashed by Pope, or for a Mr. Ford, a near relative of Dr. Johnson, notorious for his profligacy, will never now be known, but it is certain that he represents either the one or the other of those worthies.

The empty bottles on the table, the mantelpiece, and the floor, amounting to above twenty in number, prove how lengthened and persevering has been the debauch. In justification of Hogarth's introduction of a priest as the president of so disgraceful and riotous a scene, Lord Sandwich tells the following anecdote:—"I was in company where there were ten parsons, and I made a wager privately and won it, that among them there was not one prayer-book. I then offered to lay another wager, that among the ten parsons there were half a score of corkscrews—it was accepted. The butler received his instructions, pretended to break his corkscrew, and requested any gentleman to lend him one, when each priest pulled a corkscrew from his pocket."

Luckily for us, such "Modern Midnight Conversation" is no longer the fashion of the age. We have our vices and our follies as well as our predecessors of the last century, and if they had a Hogarth, we have a Thackeray and a Dickens, to expose them in all their absurdity and hideousness. But, great as may be our guilt, we are seldom degraded below the level of the brute creation by such an exhibition as the scene before us.

## "THE ALCHEMIST."

This engraving is copied from one of the highly successful illustrations of *Hudibras*, which Hogarth published in the year 1726. It is impossible to appreciate the full merit of this piece without a previous knowledge of the part of Butler's masterpiece which it illustrates. We will therefore quote the passage, Part ii., canto iii.

"The knight, with various doubts possest,  
To win the lady goes in quest  
Of Sidrophel, the Rosicrucian,  
To know the destinies' resolution,  
With whom being met they both chop logic  
About the science astrologic,  
Till falling from dispute to fight,  
The conjurer's worsted by the knight."

The working up of the scene is highly humorous and original. The furniture of the alchemist's laboratory, all the implements of his art, together with the live and dead stock in use, are described with a minuteness which shows how well Hogarth had mastered the subject. His illustrations of *Hudibras* were, indeed, as we remarked before, the first productions of his pencil which gave indications of his future fame.

The conclusion of the dispute between Sidrophel the alchemist, and Hudibras the knight, is thus humorously related by Butler:—

"Huffer! quoth Hudibras, this sword  
Shall down thy false throat cram that word.  
Ralpho, make haste, and call an officer  
To apprehend this Stygian sophister."

Meanwhile, I'll hold them at a day,  
 Lest he and Whackum run away.  
 But Sidrophel, who, from the aspect  
 Of Hudibras, did now erect  
 A figure worse portending far  
 Than that of most malignant star,  
 Believed it now the fittest moment  
 To shun the danger that might come on't,



ONE OF THE STAGES OF CRUELTY. FROM A PAINTING BY WILLIAM HOGARTH.

While Hudibras was all alone,  
 And he and Whackum two to one.  
 This being resolved, he spied by chance  
 Behind the door an iron lance  
 That many a sturdy limb had gored,  
 And legs and loins and shoulders bored.  
 He snatched it up and made a pass  
 To make his way through Hudibras.  
 Whackum had got a firelock  
 With which he vowed to do his work.



Hogarth and Butler had a kindred vein of satire, and if the painter and the poet had been contemporaries, they might have played successfully into each other's hands. They had both the same enviable powers of satirising the vice without offending the individual, and of exposing folly without incurring the charge of severity. They were both philanthropists of the highest order, for their shafts were levelled not at men but at manners—not at weak and erring humanity, but at the vices and



CLARENDON AS MONARD III. FROM A PAINTING BY WILLIAM HOGARTH.  
(Engraved to the Art Treasures Exhibition by Lord Rossethorne.)

folly of the age in which they lived. The poems of Butler, like the *chefs-d'œuvre* of Hogarth, have an European reputation ; for wherever the satire is general and genuine, its application is confined to no particular age or country. The impulses of the human heart are indeed identical in every land and clime, however fashions may vary or circumstances modify them, and everywhere the same causes will produce the same effects. The scene concludes with the defeat of the Rosicrucian.

But Hudibras was well prepared,  
 And stoutly stood upon his guard.  
 He put by Sidrophello's thrust,  
 And in right manfully he rushed;  
 The weapon from his gripe he wrung,  
 And laid him on the earth along.  
 Whackum, his seacoal prong threw by,  
 And basely turned his back to fly;  
 But Hudibras gave him a twitch  
 As quick as lightning in the breech,  
 Just in the place where honour's lodged,  
 As wise philosophers have judged,  
 Because a kick in that part more  
 Hurts honour than deep wounds before."

Our illustration represents the moment when Ralpho is leaving the knight to look for an officer, and Hudibras has to contend single-handed with Sidrophel and Whackum.

Sir James Thornhill died in 1734, and Hogarth, who had entirely forgiven his father-in-law for his long estrangement, wrote in the obituary of Sylvanus Urban the following memoir of the celebrated architect:—"Sir James Thornhill, knight, was the greatest history painter this kingdom ever produced; witness his elaborate works in Greenwich Hospital, the cupola of St. Paul's, the altarpieces of All Soul's College in Oxford, and the church in Weymouth, where he was born. He was not only by patents appointed history painter to their late and present Majesties, but serjeant painter, by which he was to paint all the royal palaces, coaches, barges, and the royal navy. This late patent he surrendered in favour of his only son John. He left no other issue but one daughter, now the wife of Mr. William Hogarth, admired for his curious miniature conversation pieces." "The Harlot's Progress," which was, as we have shown, the cause of his reconciliation with his wife's father, was now followed by the "Rake's Progress," in a series of eight scenes.

"'The Rake's Progress,'" says Walpole, "though perhaps superior to 'The Harlot's Progress,' had not so much success as the others, from want of novelty; nor is the print of 'The Arrest' equal to the others."

The truth is that the town was more captivated by the humorous and original description given by Hogarth of a career of folly in woman than of that in man. The first was more romantic than the second, and had, moreover, the charms of novelty. The success of "The Harlot's Progress" may be gathered from the fact, that no less than 1,200 subscribers were entered on the artist's books. It was dramatised in every possible shape, and it formed the plot of pantomimes and ballad operas. The story of the harlot is, alas, but too circumstantially true even in the present day. She is conducted through six successive scenes of woe: from purity to guilt, from guilt to shame, and from shame to misery and death. "The Rake's Progress," though not so popular with the world, was equally striking and original. A youth, who is the heir of a sordid miser, suddenly becomes possessed of immense wealth. He deceives and deserts the woman who had been weak enough to trust him. He is the prey of a crowd of swindlers and parasites; and after passing through various phases of sin and splendour, with health wrecked and fortune squandered, is left by the artist a raving lunatic in Bedlam Hospital.

"The curtain," says Walpole, "was now drawn aside, and his genius stood displayed in its full lustre. From time to time he continued to give those works, which should be immortal, if the nature of his work will allow it. Even the receipts for his subscriptions had wit in them. Many of his plates he engraved himself; and often expunged faces etched by his assistants when they had not done justice to his ideas."

Many of the chief persons in "The Harlot's" and "The Rake's Progress" were portraits. The notorious Colonel Charteris, the greatest *roué* of his day; the pompous Justice Gonson; the celebrated Dr. Sacheverell; and Dr. Misaubin, the lean physician, who disturbs, by his disputes with a *fat confrère*, the last moments of the wretched sinner, are all drawn to the life.

In "The Rake's Progress" the actors are not so well known, but they are also believed to be portraits. Hogarth was his own engraver, and he was thus able to invest the copies of his paintings with an autograph merit which no other artist could have imparted to them. Hogarth and Martin are probably the only two painters of eminence who, by being their own engravers, have secured to

themselves the full proceeds of their works, and who have gratified their patrons with the certainty of possessing prints which have all the genius of the originals.

#### "CRUELTY."

This scene, from a painting by Hogarth, though graphic and highly circumstantial, is not pleasing. The grouping is excellent, and the knowledge of the wicked impulses of the human heart, when unchecked by religion, custom, or law, striking and profound; but still we turn from the picture with a feeling of shame and degradation. How many a generation of that noble and useful animal, whom the brutal jarvy of the day is torturing in a manner now happily forbidden by Act of Parliament, has perished since the date of this picture, under similar treatment. The conception is only too suggestive, and we sicken at the thought of the hereditary sufferings of the race of horses. Bull-baiting is also a nuisance now happily abated, and although sheep and pigs are still occasionally driven through the streets, the abominations of Smithfield are now only traditional. It is true that the ass is still the victim of wretches whom he often surpasses in intelligence; but, taken as a whole, the catalogue of cruelties contained in this picture is rather the representation of extinct than of existing abuses. Hogarth painted "Cruelty" in four stages, descriptive of the career of a boy, whose cruelty increases with his years, until he is at last hanged and dissected for an atrocious murder he has committed.

#### "GARRICK AS RICHARD III."

The celebrated painting from which we have copied our engraving was contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by Lord Feversham, and was painted, in 1746, for the ancestor of that nobleman. In the catalogue of the Art Treasures Exhibition we find the following notice of the picture, taken from Hogarth's Memoranda. "For the portrait of Mr. Garrick as Richard III. I was paid two hundred pounds, which was more than any English artist ever received for a single portrait, and that too by the sanction of several painters who had been previously consulted about the price, which was not given without mature consideration." There is a striking reality in the attitude of the tyrant. Terrified at length beyond endurance by the supernatural horrors which have haunted his dream, he is a prey to that remorse which no human agency could have awakened in his stony heart. Much fault has been found with the figure of Richard by connoisseurs, who considered it "too muscular and massy," but the immense wear and tear of mind and body which the usurper had to undergo, demanded a frame of iron and nerves of adamant. The terror depicted in every feature as he starts from his couch is highly dramatic.

This portrait of the tragedian was executed many years after the family piece of Mr. and Mrs. Garrick which gave so much offence to the celebrated actor and his wife. Hogarth was by disposition incapable of flattery, and as he had represented the great popular favourites more as nature had made them than as art had moulded them, he of course gave offence. Players live upon praise. It is as necessary to them as their daily food. And Garrick, who had so long been the object of the incense of poets, painters, and pit-frequenting critics, could not bear to see himself represented as a mere commonplace mortal, seated at an ordinary table, and with a wife who had nothing *distingué* about her coming behind him to take the pen out of his hand.

Garrick openly disapproved of the piece, and his wife, although she did not complain of the likeness of herself, said disparagingly, that "her dear husband looked less noble in nature than in art." Hogarth was highly incensed at these unjust criticisms. In a fit of indignation, he drew his pencil across the actor's mouth, and never afterwards added a single touch to the painting. At the time of his death it was still unaltered and unpaid for, and Mrs. Hogarth sent it to Mrs. Garrick without making any charge for it.

#### "HOGARTH'S PORTRAIT."

Our great satirist painted many likenesses of himself, but the portrait of which the accompanying engraving is a copy is the one with which the public is the most familiar.

He was in stature rather below the middle height. His eye, which was bright and piercing, was

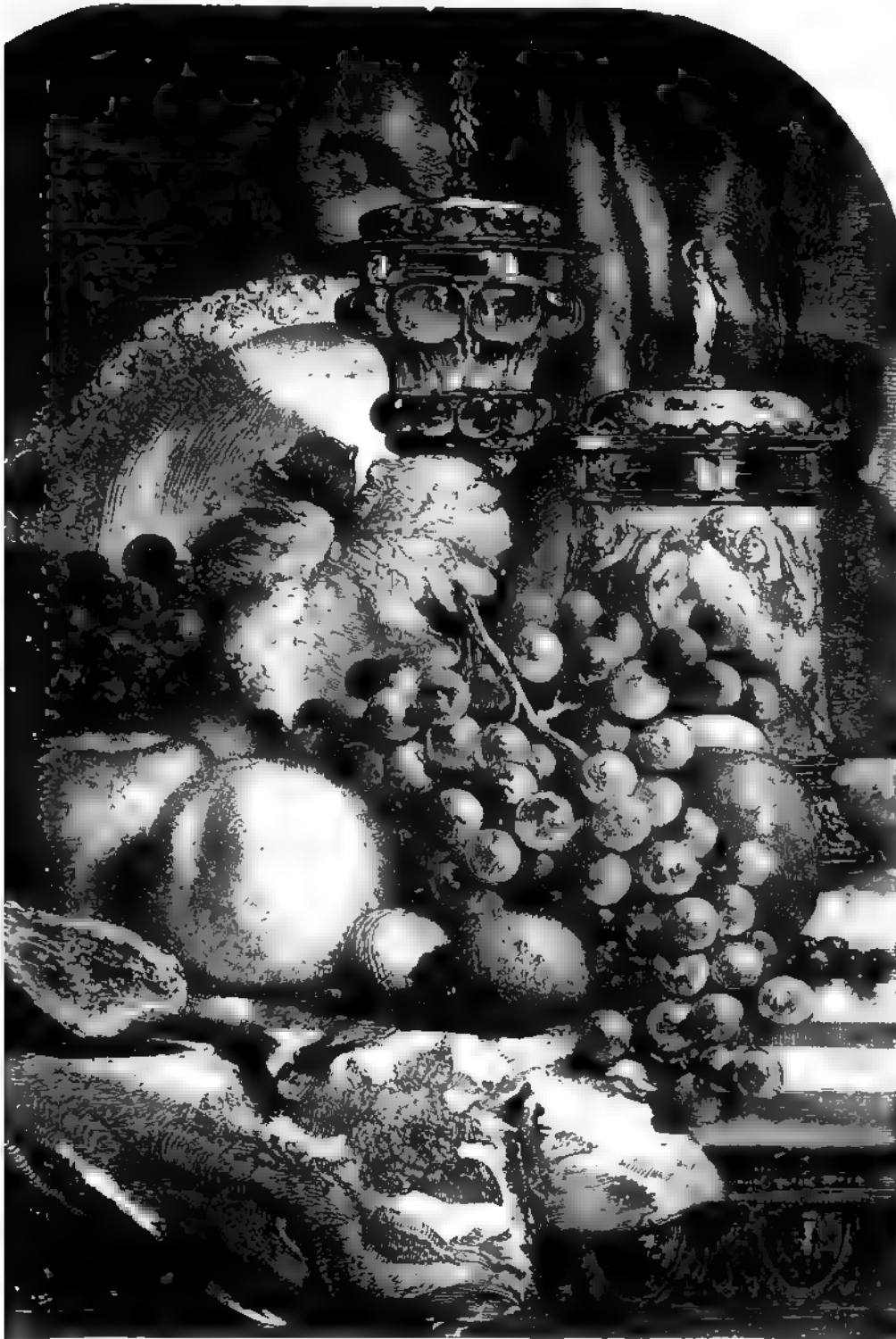


WILLIAM HOGARTH. FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF.



indicative of the wit, drollery, and humour which distinguished all his artistic productions. His forehead was high and round, with the reflective and perceptive organs equally well developed. His eccentricities were characteristic of his genius. He took as much pains in displaying the scar of a wound on his forehead as most men would have taken in concealing it. The bull-dog, whom he has introduced into the picture, he evidently intended as a kind of *fac simile* of himself, and the likeness between the man and his favourite dog must strike every one who studies the piece.

He was active and energetic, muscular in frame, and bustling in manner. The merry twinkle of his eye was indicative of the mirth and good-fellowship of his disposition; but in his friendships and resentments he displayed the pertinacity of the bull-dog. Many contemporary writers have borne testimony to the sterling worth of his character. "In his relations of husband, brother, friend,



FRUIT. FROM A PAINTING BY GEORGE LANCER.

and master," says Ireland, "he was kind, generous, sincere, and indulgent; in diet abstemious, but in his hospitality, though devoid of ostentation, liberal and free-hearted; not parsimonious, yet frugal. But so comparatively small were the rewards then paid to artists, that, after the labour of a long life, he left a very inconsiderable sum to his widow, with whom he must have received a large portion." Though formidable and persevering in his resentment, he was nevertheless a generous foe, and levelled the shafts of his wit and satire only on those who were present—never on the absent. He was no respecter of persons, but often provoked, both by his pencil and his pen, those whom it would have been more prudent to conciliate. He was always ready to attack vice and folly in high and low, rich and poor; but then he made his attack openly and in the light of day, for it was his constant boast that he never said a thing behind a man's back which he would not gladly have told him to his face.

In his domestic economy he was most liberal and hospitable, and, as the proceeds of his works were at one time large, he had the means of indulging his generous and convivial impulses. He was steadfastly attached to Mrs. Hogarth, who returned his affection with interest, and no one, except that proverbially slanderous Wilkes, ever insinuated that he lived on bad terms with his wife.

The "*Mariage à la Mode*," in six noble pictures, was the next production of his genius upon which immortality has set its stamp. The fate of the hero and heroine of this clever satirical romance is almost as tragical as that of the principal actors in the *Harlot's* and the *Rake's Progress*. The husband is murdered by the lady's paramour, who expiates his crime on the scaffold, and the guilty wife dies from the effects of poison, administered by herself.

The introduction into the piece of the sordid old father, who, untouched by the misery and guilt of his expiring child, is carefully removing from her finger a costly ring, is only too suggestive of the hardness of the human heart. In the attitude of the babe who twines its tiny arms round the neck of the dying mother, there is something inexpressibly affecting. This wonderful and interesting production was, notwithstanding its acknowledged merit, sold by public auction to Mr. Lane, for the paltry sum of one hundred and ten guineas. The transaction is thus described by the purchaser:—"The sale was to take place by a kind of auction, where every bidder was to write on a ticket the price he was disposed to give, with his name subscribed to it. These papers were to be received by Mr. Hogarth for the space of one month, and the highest bidder, at twelve o'clock on the last day of the month, was to be the purchaser. This strange mode of proceeding probably disobliterated the public, and there seemed to be at that time a combination against Hogarth, who, perhaps, from the frequent and extraordinary approbation of his works, might have imbibed some degree of vanity, which the town in general, friends and foes, seemed resolved to mortify. If this was the case, and to me it was fully apparent, they effected their design, for, on the 6th of June, 1750, which was to decide the fate of this capital work, when I arrived at the Golden Head, expecting, as was the case at the sale of '*The Harlot's Progress*,' to find his study full of noble and great personages, I found only Hogarth and his friend Dr. Parsons, secretary to the Royal Society. I had bid one hundred and ten pounds. No one arrived; and, ten minutes before twelve, I told the artist I would make the pounds guineas.

"The clock struck, and Mr. Hogarth wished me joy of my purchase, hoping it was an agreeable one; I said perfectly so. Dr. Parsons was very much disturbed, and Hogarth very much disappointed, and truly with great reason. The former told me the painter had hurt himself, by naming so early an hour for the sale, and Hogarth, who overheard him, said in a marked tone and manner, 'Perhaps it may be so.' I concurred in the same opinion, said he was poorly rewarded for his labour, and if he chose he might have till three o'clock to find a better bidder. Hogarth warmly accepted the offer, and Dr. Parsons proposed to make it public. I thought this unfair, and forbade it. At one o'clock, Hogarth said, 'I shall trespass no longer on your generosity; you are the proprietor, and if you are pleased with the purchase, I am abundantly so with the purchaser.' He then desired me to promise that I would not dispose of the paintings without informing him, nor permit any person to meddle with them under pretence of cleaning them, as he always desired to do that himself."

Forty-seven years afterwards, Colonel Cawthorne, who inherited the "*Mariage à la Mode*" from Lane, sold the series to Angerstein for £1,381,—so much had time enhanced this immortal production of Hogarth's genius.

The design of a series of paintings under the title of "*The Happy Marriage*," was laid aside, in favour of "*The Two Fellow-prentices*," although the artist had already sketched the six scenes.

Industry and idleness exemplified in the conduct of "the two 'prentices," though not by any means the best things Hogarth had done, were perhaps the most popular. They conveyed a practical lesson of the greatest utility, and the engravings from the etchings were everywhere purchased by parents and masters.

"The Roast Beef of Old England" was intended as a retaliation for the indignity put upon the artist at Calais, where he had been arrested as a spy while sketching one of the gates of the town, but the sarcasm is tame and insipid.

Of "The Four Stages of Cruelty," we have already spoken; but a piece of greater merit, though of less general application, was "The March of the Guards to Finchley." The fertility of invention displayed in the manner in which all the elements of confusion, clamour, and tumult are exemplified in the rear of the marching troops, baffles all description. George II., who had no appreciation of the humorous, was indignant at the satire, and sent it back to the artist with the insulting remark, "What! a painter burlesque a soldier! he deserves to be picketed for his insolence. Take his trumpet out of my sight." Hogarth, in revenge, dedicated his *chef-d'œuvre* to the King of Prussia, who, as an encourager of fine art, gave him a handsome acknowledgment for the compliment.

The pictures of "Beer Street" and "Gin Lane," have been cleverly described by Ireland. "In the first," says that author, "we see healthy and happy beings inhaling copious draughts of a liquor which seems perfectly congenial to their mental and corporeal powers; in the second, a group of emaciated wretches, who, by swallowing liquid fire, have consumed both." All will acknowledge the wholesome tendency of the lesson conveyed by "Gin Lane," but many will dispute the advantages to be derived from excess in beer-drinking.

"France and England" are conceived in the same spirit as "The Roast Beef of Old England," but the satire is more genuine and the wit more pointed. Of "The Cock-pit," and of "The Election," divided into four scenes—"The Entertainment," "The Canvassing for Votes," "The Polling," and "The Chairing"—we have already spoken. They both illustrate the wonderful power Hogarth possessed of exposing in a manner at once popular, amusing, and inoffensive, the follies and vices of his countrymen.

Our painter could use his pen with effect as well as his pencil. To explain what he meant by "the line of beauty and grace," which he had etched upon his palette as a motto, he published, in the year 1753, "The Analysis of Beauty," a work in which many original notions concerning art are clearly and cleverly explained, and in which the winding or serpentine line is stated to be the foundation of all that is fair and beautiful in art or nature. His pages were illustrated with numerous etchings executed by himself. As he attacked, with his usual freedom of expression, many contemporary portrait painters and copiers of pictures, his book was, as he must have anticipated, severely criticised. His old antagonist, Wilkes, would never give him credit for the literary ability displayed in this work, and even after the controversy as to authorship had subsided, endeavoured to renew it through the following unjust aspersion:—"He never caught," says the inimical and scurrilous patriot, "a single idea of grace, beauty, or elegance; but, on the other hand, he never missed the least flaw in almost any production of nature or of art. This arose in some measure from his head, but much more from his heart. After 'The Mariage à la Mode,' the public wished for a series of prints of a happy marriage. Hogarth made the attempt, but the rancour and malevolence of his mind made him very soon turn away with envy and disgust from objects of so pleasing contemplation, to dwell and feast a bad heart on others of a hateful cast, which he pursued (for he found them congenial) with the most unrelenting gall."

Walpole attacked the work, but with less bitterness. "The book," he says, "is the failing of a visionary, whose eyes were so little open to his own deficiencies that he believed he had discovered the principle of grace, and, with the enthusiasm of a discoverer, cried out 'Eureka!'" But if some criticised, others approved of the principles he laid down, and the blame and the praise were pretty equally balanced. Bishop Warburton, who was among the admirers of Hogarth's book, says, in a letter to the artist, "I was pleased that you have determined to give us your original and masterly thoughts on the great principles of your profession. You owe this to your country, for you are both an honour to your profession and a shame to that worthless crew professing *vertu* and connoisseurship; to whom all that grovel in the splendid poverty of wealth and taste are the miserable bubbles." Benjamin West, also, in speaking many years afterwards of "The Analysis of Beauty," said: "It is a work of the

highest value to every one studying art. \* \* \* Now that it is examined by disinterested readers, unbiassed by personal animosity, it will be more and more read, studied, and understood."

Of the "Sigismunda" controversy we have already spoken, and of the satirical print of "The Times," by the publication of which the artist endeavoured to avenge his wrongs.

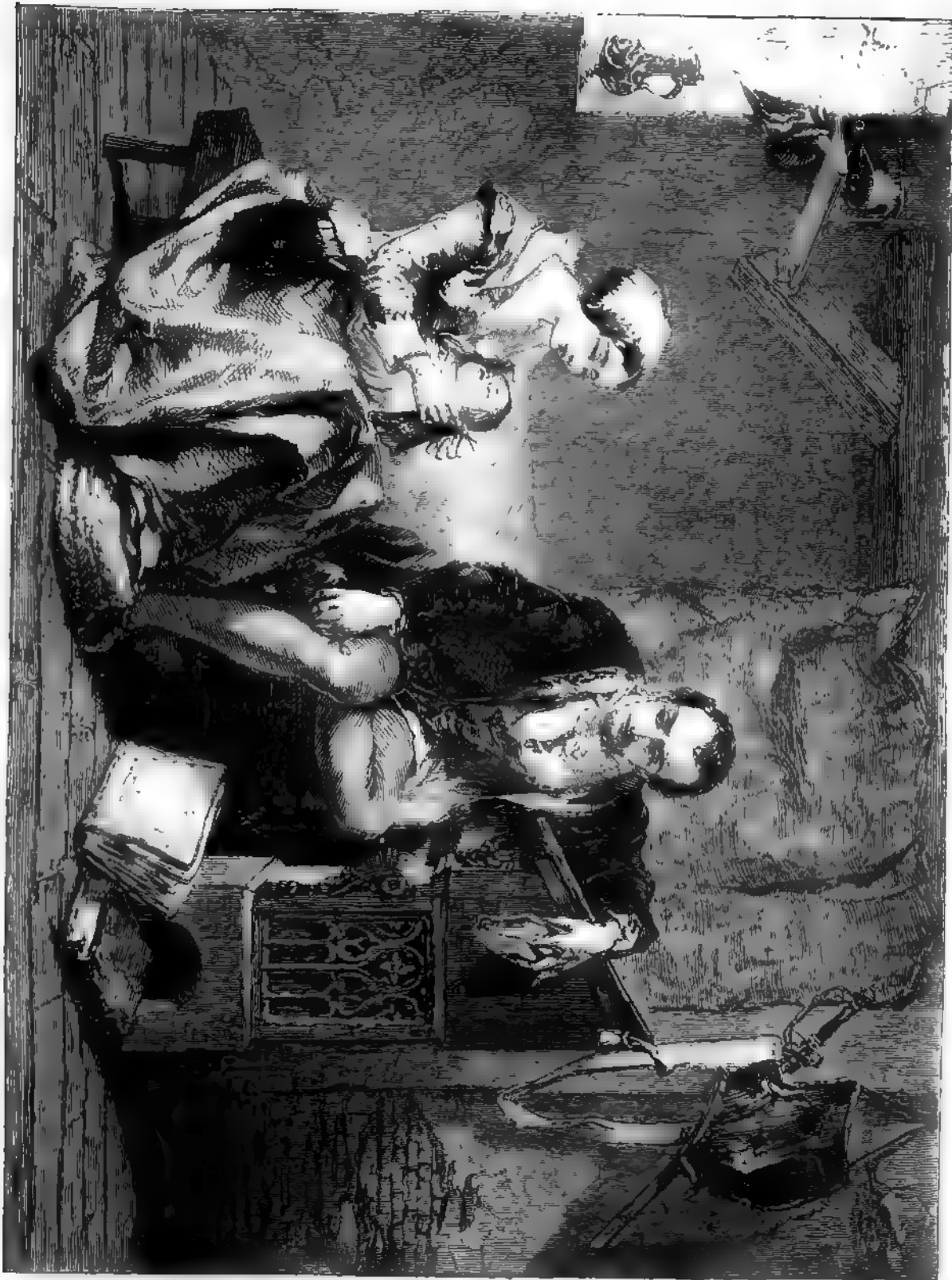
The last work of any importance that Hogarth ever painted was entitled "Credulity, Superstition, and Fanaticism." The object of this characteristic painting was to illustrate the baneful effects on the



THE REDCAP. FROM A PAINTING BY GEORGE LANGE.  
(By consent of G. Lange.)

mind of a material interpretation of sacred things, and especially of the introduction of pictures and images into places of worship. Absurd, however, as Hogarth has made superstition appear, the reality is more ridiculous than the burlesque; for Burnet tells us that "over a Popish altar at Worms, there is a picture, invented, one would think, to ridicule transubstantiation. There is a windmill, and the Virgin Mary throws Christ into the hopper, and he comes out at the eye of the mill all in wafers, which a priest takes up to give to the people."





SCENE OF THE STOCKING LOOM. FROM A PAINTING BY A. TROPEL, P.A.

Sin and folly were, however, soon to be relieved from the attacks of their most formidable foe. Hogarth was of a sensitive and susceptible nature, and he had in consequence suffered much both in mind and body from the unjust attacks of those who feared and hated him. He tried the effect of change of air upon his declining health, and purchased a small house at Chiswick, where he amused himself during the summer in sketching new scenes and retouching his old plates. But though pure air, green fields, and regular exercise on horseback benefited him at first, "the fret of nerve" was of too long standing to allow of any permanent renewal of health.

He left Chiswick at the end of October, 1764, and returned to his town residence in Leicester-square. The day after his arrival in town he wrote the rough copy of an answer to an agreeable letter he had received from Dr. Franklin, and feeling more than usually exhausted retired early to rest. He had been but a short time in bed when he was seized with violent sickness, and after a severe and protracted agony of two hours' duration, expired from the suffocation consequent upon the rupture of some of the bloodvessels in the region of the heart.

He was interred in the churchyard at Chiswick, and on his tombstone was engraved, under his family arms, the following simple inscription:—"Here lieth the body of William Hogarth, Esq., who died October the 26th, 1764, aged 67 years." David Garrick wrote an epitaph for his monument, but as the ideas as well as the metre were tame and commonplace for the eminent artist whose extraordinary powers they record, Dr. Johnson supplied a verse more pithy and applicable:—

"The hand of him here torpid lies  
That drew the essential forms of grace,  
Here closed in death the attentive eyes  
That saw the manners in the face."

Hogarth left no issue. His widow, who survived him about twenty-five years, died in November, 1789, in the eightieth year of her age, and was buried beside her husband at Chiswick. Hogarth had bequeathed at his death the sole property in all his numerous plates to his wife. But although the copyright in this valuable bequest was secured to her for twenty years by Act of Parliament, she outlived the period allotted to her for the enjoyment of her right. So poor indeed was she at last, that had not the King induced the Royal Academy to grant her a pension of forty pounds a year, she would have been in actual want. When we take into account the fortune that she brought Hogarth, and the many years she enjoyed the copyright in all his plates, it is difficult to account for her state of destitution.

#### HOGARTH'S MERITS.

Hogarth, as a painter and engraver, has a world-wide reputation. His representations of real life are thoroughly dramatic. His humour delights the fancy—his well-directed and judicious satire pleases the understanding—his touching scenes of human misery affect the heart, and his ludicrous illustrations of popular folly excite the risibility of all who can appreciate his works. He was the disciple of no school, he was the pupil of no master. He drew his inspirations from nature, and it is his glory and not his reproach that he is unlike in everything to all the artists who either preceded or followed him. He was thoroughly English in his character and style, he borrowed nothing from the ancients, and was indebted neither to history nor poetry for his conceptions.

His satire is so genuine and his humour and knowledge of the human heart so great, that his works are "not for an age but for all time." He had studied men, not books; and however unlearned he might be in the jargon of the schools, he was well read in the character of his countrymen. He is worshipped by all who have any real appreciation of genius, and he is only criticised by those creatures of routine who, always prating about the grand style, see nothing admirable but in the servile imitations of Raphael, Titian, or Corregio.

---

# GEORGE LANCE.

## "THE REDCAP."

This picture is, with the exception of the Monkey, who is introduced for effect, a picture of still life, or as the French term it, *Nature morte*. The red handkerchief twisted round the head of the ape is intended to give to this curious caricature of human nature the appearance of a hideous old woman. In the introduction of the monkey Mr. Lance has followed a very ancient precedent. Painters of all ages have pandered to the morbid fancy which most people feel for these grotesque libels upon our race in their pictures, and before the time of the "*Renaissance*" there was such an universal passion for monkeys, that we find them forming a part of all the paintings of the time, and not only was every house provided with its jackey, but the image of this odious animal was sculptured on the façades of buildings and served to adorn the articles of domestic use.

In France, the port of Dieppe had a kind of monopoly in the importation of monkeys, and in such estimation were they held that a good specimen was sure to realise, at least, five francs, or about half the sum which an ox in those days would fetch in the market. Their powers of imitation were cultivated to such an extent that, when dressed in character, they have performed their part so well as actually to be mistaken for the little pages or tigers they represented. On one occasion a gardener, who had never before seen a monkey, met on the stairs of the house of his employer a page of this kind, and deceived by his fine apparel and courteous manners, presented him with a basket of fruit he had just gathered for the master of the counterfeit page. The monkey seized on the most tempting contents of the basket, and then, with a hideous grimace, disappeared. When the gardener was taxed by his master with the theft of the fruit, he said, "You must not be angry, sir, for *your son*, who met me on the stairs, carried off the finest part of it."

Pictures of still life are, on the whole, an inferior style of painting, as imitation of the objects they represent is their principal merit. That poetry of the imagination which translates upon the canvas the conceptions of the artist's mind, has no existence in such compositions. The contemplation of these pieces may amuse the eye and arouse some little curiosity, but it can neither elevate the mind nor influence the heart of the spectator. They are the appropriate ornament of the dining-room where they suggest notions of plenty and tickle the fancy of the epicurean; but the display of fruit, vegetables, fish, and game has little attraction for any but the sensualist. Minds of a higher order sicken at the sight of this transformation of a drawing-room into a kitchen; and, on that account, paintings are preferred which appeal more to the imagination than the senses, and which rather suggest to the mind subjects for contemplation than to the appetite objects for its gratification. Landscapes, flowers, merry-makings, or scenes of rural enjoyment have been substituted wherever taste, feeling, and propriety are in the ascendant, for those subjects of "still life" which are now almost monopolised by water-colour artists, or are only found on the canvas which adorns the dining halls of Dutch and Flemish Burgomasters. We do not question the merit of some of these pictures. It may be almost as difficult to arrive at perfection in this style of painting as in another, but the inventive power, which must be a natural gift, because we know of no instance in which it has been acquired, is not called into action, and it is on that account that pictures of still life will always rank, in the scale of art, far below the conceptions of historical, landscape, or portrait painters.

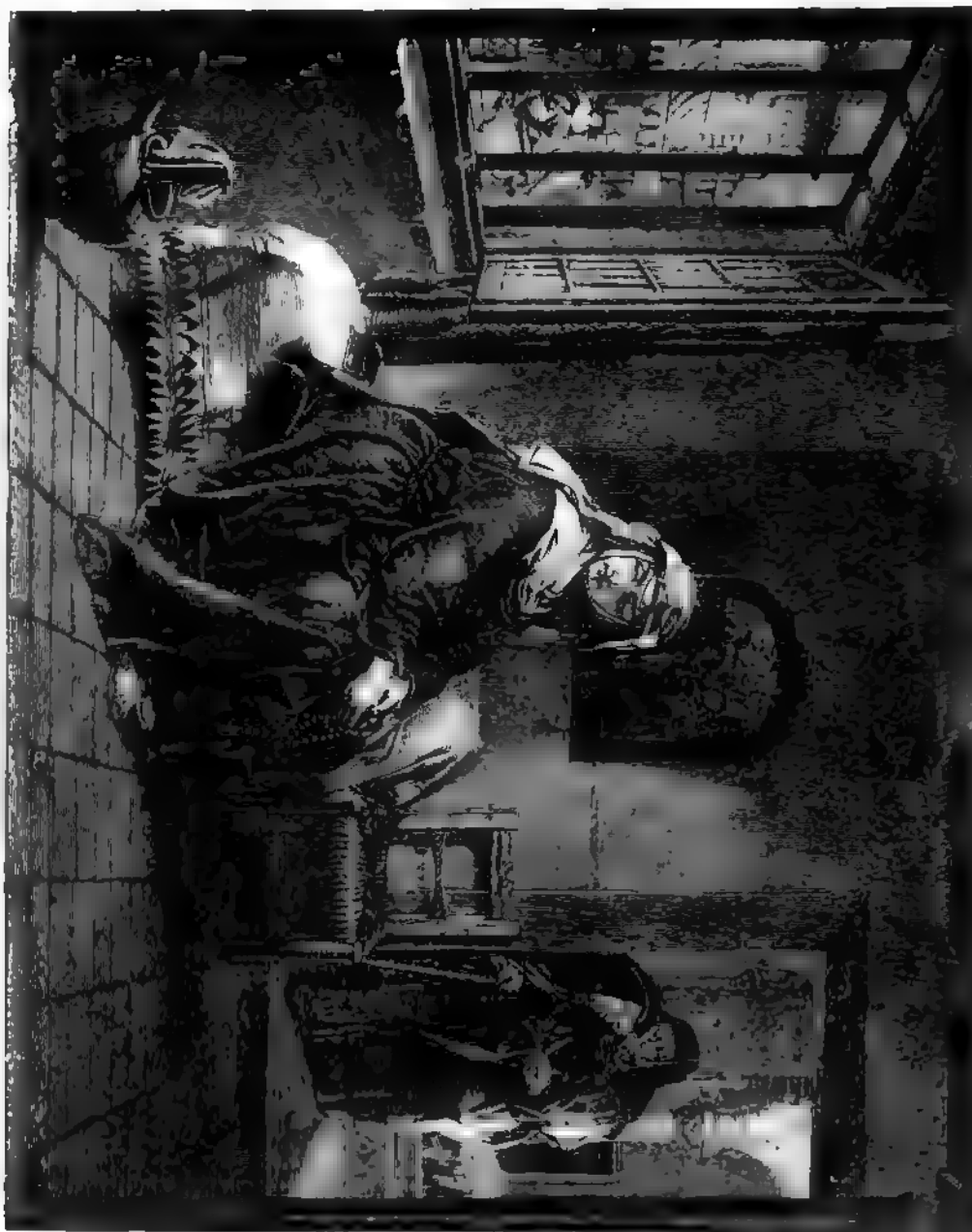
## "FRUIT."

This beautiful engraving by Guilbert, from a painting by George Lance, is as suggestive as any fruit piece with which we are acquainted. The soft bloom of the purple grapes, and the yellow richness of the *raisins de Fontainebleau*, at once fascinating to the eye and alluring to the appetite, remind us of those inspiring lines of our noble bard:—

"Sweet is the vintage when the grapes  
Reel to the earth in bacchanal profusion,  
Purple and gushing."

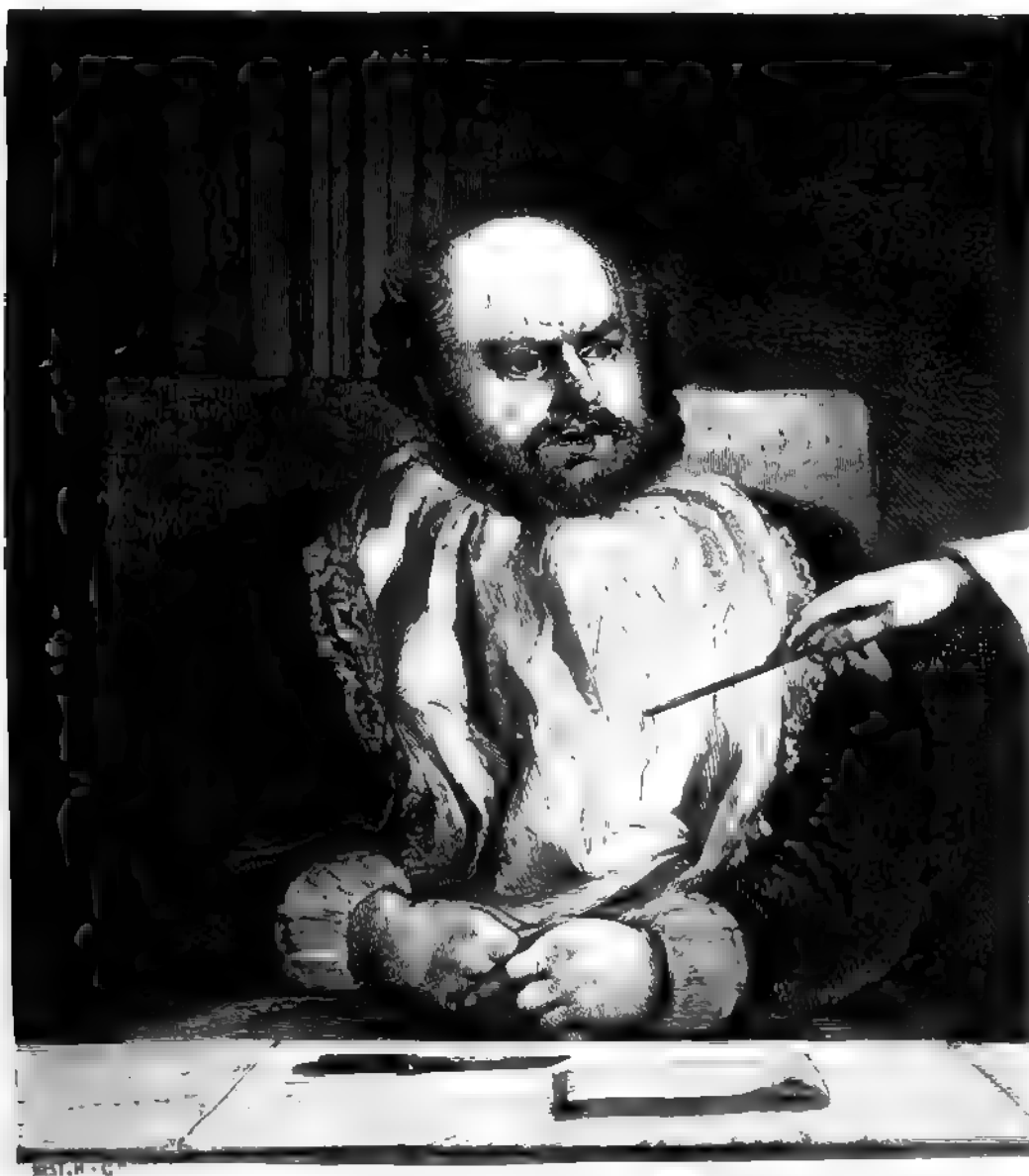
Paintings of this nature delight the sight without elevating or inspiring the heart or the imagination. The subject is wholly sensual; for even the accessories, such as the marble slab, the vase, the dish, and the drapery, are all intended to add to the appetising influence of the fruit and to enhance their lustre and attraction.

THE BOYCE. FROM A PAINTING BY A. KIMORE, R. A.  
*Contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by William Beckett, Esq.*



Fruit and flowers, especially the latter, are the great ornaments of youth, innocence, and beauty. In all ages and all countries painters have decked female loveliness with flowers, and have made the ripe produce of the yellow autumn the most becoming appendage to infancy and childhood. They represent Cybele and Pomona with a cornucopia, pouring, from an inexhaustible supply, the treasures of all the seasons. Their bas-reliefs and their bronzes are all embossed with fruit and flowers, and

even the pillars of their orders of architecture are surmounted by ornaments of fruit. Representations of fruit are accompanied with no disagreeable reminiscences: as these alluring gifts of Providence ripen between seed time and harvest, they recall neither the fatigues of the one nor the exigencies of the other, but occupying, as it were, an intermediate space, they seem to be less the produce of the sweat of man's brow than of the refreshing dews of summer. They breathe of nothing but incense,



SAVINO PANZA. FROM A PAINTING BY C. R. LESLIE, R.A.  
(By permission of Mr. Marshall Holloway.)

freshness, and delight. They form the least substantial articles of our consumption, but they are the most indispensable of our superfluities.

Mr. George Lance, whose well-known works have so long and so justly rendered his name a household word, was born at Little Easton, near Colchester, on the 24th of March, 1802. With some others

of his gifted contemporaries, he was at an early age placed as a pupil under Haydon, whose large works Mr. Lance was allowed to paint. He always received the praises of his enthusiastic, but unfortunate master.

Some of Mr. Lance's historical and imaginative pictures show what he might have done if he had persevered in following that line of art. Take, for instance, "Melancthon's First Misgivings of the Church of Rome," which gained the prize at the Liverpool Academy; his "Biron Conspiracy;" his "Lady in Waiting," now in the choice collection of Lord Northwick; his "Village Coquette" and "Red Cap," formerly in the cabinet of Mr. Broderip, but now in the magnificent collection of Mr. Thomas Baring, who also possesses "The Ballad," a work worthy of the best Dutch School in its best time. These and many other similar pictures show, we repeat, what the painter might have done if he had continued to cultivate this branch of his profession; and it must be confessed, that splendid as his fruit and still life are, it is not without regret that we see his marvellous execution and high knowledge of colour and composition lavished on these subjects, though in the treatment of them he stands unrivalled among the modern, and may compete with the best of the ancients whose works in that style have come down to us.

He first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1828; and since 1835 has been a regular contributor; but is still plain George Lance, though for five-and-twenty years he has been a candidate for academic honours. Many of the academicians would, we opine, find it rather difficult to produce such works as those in the collections of the Duke of Bedford, the Duke of Marlborough, Lord Northwick, Lord Overstone, Mr. Wells, Mr. Baring, Sir M. Peto, Mr. Betts, and many other distinguished patrons, or show so complete a clearance of their painting rooms. Such a disappointment to his ambition, as this long continued rejection, is indeed well balanced by the flattering circumstance, that nearly four hundred pictures have been executed by this diligent artist, ALL of which have found purchasers; and now few real patrons of art are without some, if not several, of his productions. We are indebted to a private source for this interesting memoir of Mr. Lance.

## ALFRED ELMORE, R.A.



Extract from "The Men of the Time" the following brief memoir of this celebrated artist:—"Alfred Elmore, R.A., was born at Clonakilty, in the county of Cork, in 1816; a painter of ability in a kind which abounds at the present day. First exhibited at the Academy in 1834; not again, with one exception, for nine years. The titles of some of his earliest pictures evidence aspirations within the range of the high historic: A 'Crucifixion,' at the British Institution in 1838; 'The Martyrdom of Thomas à Becket,' at the Academy in 1839 (the latter painted for Mr. O'Connell in 1839); both now in a Roman Catholic church in Dublin. He next visited Italy, and on his return exhibited 'Rienzi in the Forum,' in 1844. One or two pictures of slighter pretension at the British Institution—the gleanings of Italian travel—were selected by Art Union prize-holders. Historical, or semi-historical incidents, treated in the spirit of the *genre* painters, proved even more successful. The 'Origin of the Guelph and Ghibelline Quarrel,' of 1845, gained a purchaser in the holder of the Art Union's highest prize, £300. In the same year he was elected Associate of the Academy. The 'Fainting of Hero,' from 'Much Ado about Nothing,' the following year, again seduced the choice of the Art Union's leading prize-holder. It was not the last of his pictures which has pleased fortunate prize-holders. Mr. Elmore has been especially prosperous in that respect. Of the exhibition of 1847, 'The Invention of the Stocking-Loom' was a popular feature—a clever rendering of an anecdote not intrinsically pictorial. Amid the quest for novel and attractive subjects, the byeways of history have been eagerly

ransacked by the young competitors among our painters for notice. The best of Mr. Elmore's subsequent pictures have been 'The Death-bed of Robert, King of Naples, Wise and Good' (1848), 'Religious Controversy in the Time of Louis XIX.' (1849), 'Griselda' (1850), 'Hotspur and the Fop' (1851), 'A Subject from Pepy's Diary,' 'Mr. Hales began my Wife's Portrait' (1852)," &c. &c.

#### "ORIGIN OF THE STOCKING-LOOM."

The painting represented by our wood engraving is the masterpiece of A. Elmore, a Royal Academician, and was contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by T. Bayley, Esq. The stocking-loom economises human labour to so great an extent, and is, moreover, an invention so useful and practical, that we shall make no apology for introducing the romantic incidents with which its origin is connected.

A little more than two centuries and a half ago, towards the end of the long and prosperous reign of Queen Elizabeth, an undergraduate was expelled from the University of Cambridge for a violation of academical discipline. Contrary to the statute "therein made and provided," he had formed an attachment for a maiden every way worthy of him, and had married her without calculating the consequences of his imprudence. The Dons were inexorable; and as neither his wife nor himself had any capital to begin upon, except youth, hope, and love, their condition was sorely perplexing. William Lee—for such was the name of our young hero—had learning, and plenty of it; but in those days nothing was as yet said about the education of the people, and no one had ever dreamed of the universal diffusion of useful knowledge. There was, in consequence, little hope of his turning his scholarship to account; and his dependence, for their mutual support, was on the needle of his wife.

He could not contemplate without a secret sense of degradation her delicate fingers plying in patient resignation their daily toil; and, as necessity is the mother of invention, he elaborated in his mind a scheme which should not only provide for the present emergency, but protect herself and her lovely infant from all apprehension of future want.

One morning, after having bestowed more attention than usual upon the monotonous process in which his fair and fragile helpmate was engaged, he suddenly exclaimed—

"Mary, I think I could contrive a machine which would set those fingers free, and earn a living for thyself and that young cherub on thy knee!"

Mary answered him only with a look of affectionate inquiry. "It seems to me," said the inventor of the stocking-loom, "that what you accomplish with so much patient industry, I could effect by a mechanical contrivance, which should economise all the labour I have watched with such painful interest." "I know, William," said she, "that if affection could suggest the plan of a machine which should protect our helpless babe—for whom I feel far more anxiety than I do for ourselves—from the penury which threatens her, you would not linger over the execution of your scheme; but tell me what it is you mean."

With the prophetic instinct of genius, William Lee then explained to his admiring wife the principles of the machine, which he already foresaw would be a source, not only of individual, but of national, wealth, and which, in the annals of English invention, deserves to stand side by side with the steam-engine. The first machine in which William Lee embodied his idea was, of course, but a rude contrivance of wood and iron; but, such as it was, it enabled him to knit, in an incredibly short space of time, those stockings in the manufacture of which his wife's health and spirits had been so severely tried. When he had realised a sufficient sum of money to extend his business, he set up as a stocking-weaver at Nottingham, and plied the trade, not only for his own advantage, but with the liberality of true genius he associated in the secret of this productive invention his brother and his cousins.

The English nation was, however, slow in recognising the value of William Lee's machine. Neither Queen Elizabeth nor her successor, James, patronised the stocking-loom; and the inventor, disgusted with the ingratitude or stupidity of his countrymen, removed with his apparatus to France, where he was cordially welcomed by Henry of Navarre. His, however, was the common fate of genius. He was a Protestant, and was therefore involved in that persecution of the Huguenots which followed shortly after the assassination of Henri IV. by Ravallac. His end, although he escaped the actual tortures of the Huguenot persecution, was sufficiently sad, for he died in Paris of grief and disappointment. The painting by Elmore represents him at the moment he is planning in his own mind the

machine which shall relieve his lovely and delicate wife from the wearisome and monotonous occupation in which she is engaged.

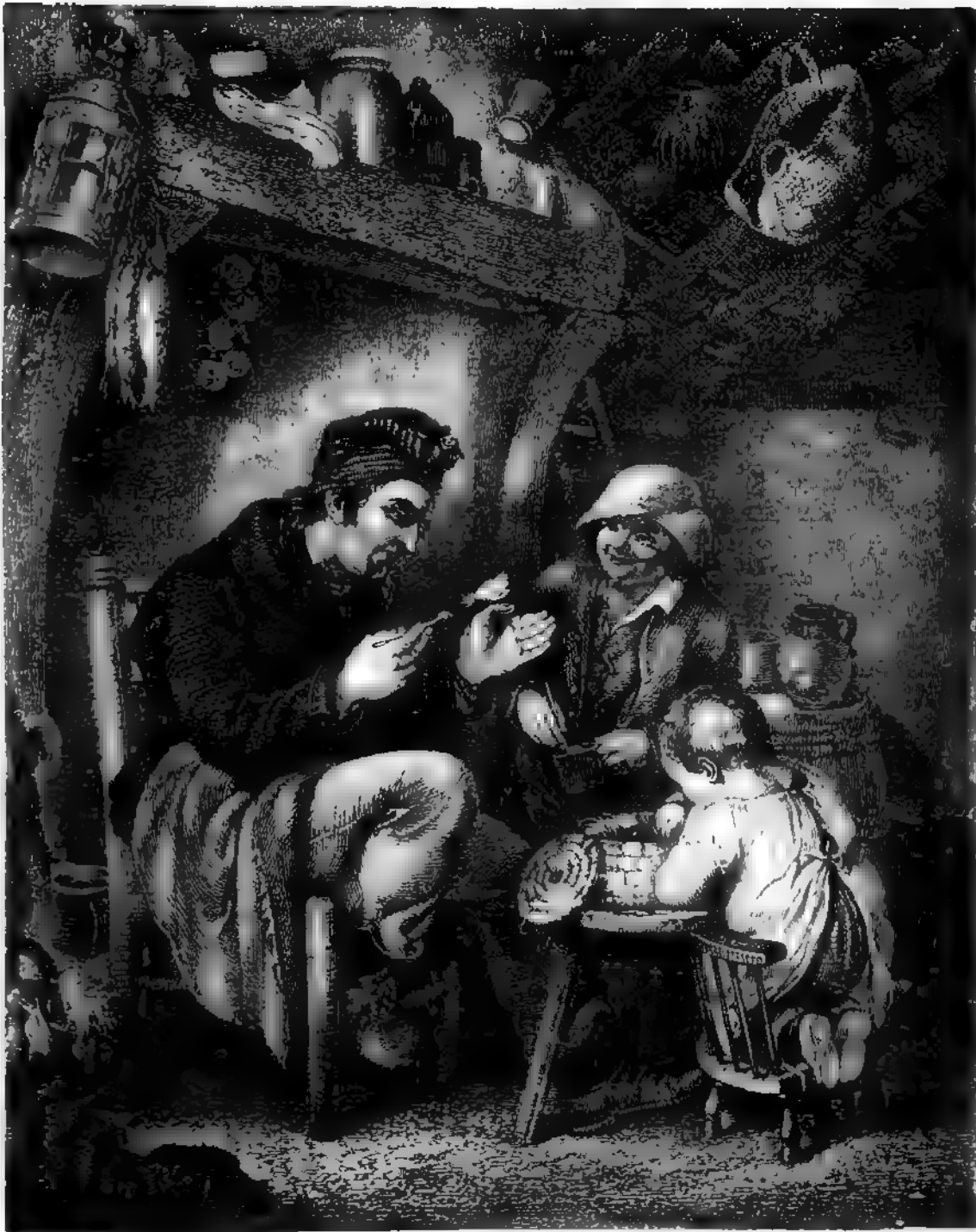
Among the Protestants who fled to England from the persecution of Charles IX. was one Aston,



THE RIVALS FROM A PAINTING BY C. R. LESLIE, R.A.  
(Contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by E. Sedgwick, Esq.)

an apprentice of the stocking-loom inventor. More fortunate than his master, he enlisted the Court in his favour (for the Stuarts were more enlightened patrons of industrial enterprise than the Tudors), and established productive stocking-loom manufactories at Nottingham and Leicester. For more





THE ORPHAN HEED. FROM A PAINTING BY BURNET.

than a century very few alterations were made in the machine ; but the late Mr. Jedediah Strutt at length contrived, by means of an improvement which he introduced into the original stocking-loom, to manufacture *ribbed-hose*.

## "THE NOVICE."

The graphic and suggestive painting of "The Novice," by A. Elmore, R.A., was contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by William Bashall. The interior of the cell in which the young devotee will have to pass the monotonous period of her novitiate is faithfully and circumstantially represented. The bare and ghastly walls, the meagre supply of furniture consisting of a *grabat*, or pallet, of the plainest and rudest description, with a single mattress and coverlid, but without hangings, valances, or any of those appliances of comfort or luxury which might relieve the desolate and penitential appearance of the narrow chamber, have a dismal effect on the spirits. One rush-bottom chair, with a vessel of water and towel, make up the miserable complement.

The young novice had evidently not selected, *par préférence*, the questionable happiness of

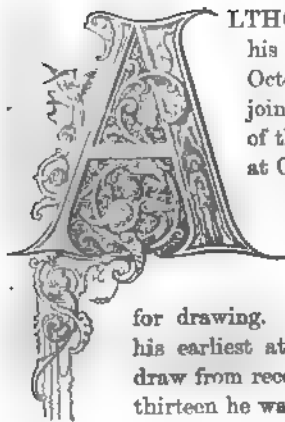
"The blameless vestal's lot,  
The world forgetting, by the world forgot."

There is a fund of *arrière-pensée* in the side-glance which she casts at the merry sons and daughters of the world, whose animated prattle, loud jests, and ringing laugh reach her not inattentive or unwilling ear, through the open casement. She is still in the world, although no longer of the world; and in the novelty of her position, she cannot yet realise to herself the forced seclusion of that fictitious death she has voluntarily inflicted upon herself. The painter had evidently in his mind, when he conceived this suggestive piece, the significative lines of the poet:—

"For who to dumb forgetfulness a prey,  
This pleasing, anxious being e'er resigned;  
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,  
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?"

How listlessly and mechanically her tapering fingers glide over the beads of her rosary, as her imagination dwells once again upon the scenes to which youth, hope, and love had lent such an exquisite charm, but from which, on the day when the portals of her living tomb closed upon her, she was for ever debarred. The austerities of a convent, however, can never stifle the voice of nature in the breast of the novice, or triumph over the eternal decrees of Providence.

## CHARLES ROBERT LESLIE, R.A.



ALTHOUGH English by birth, this celebrated artist is of American origin, for his parents were citizens of the New World. He was born in London, October 19th, 1794. His grandfather, who was a Scotchman and a Jacobite, joined in the "rising" of 1745, but emigrated to America, when the rebellion of that date had been effectually suppressed by the defeat of the Highlanders at Culloden. Although the first period of his childhood was passed in London, he is indebted to the land of his parents for the rudiments of his artistic education.

When he was only five years of age, his father returned to Philadelphia; but long before that time he had given decided proofs of a talent for drawing. He was continually sketching soldiers and horses on his slate; and even his earliest attempts display much character and spirit. At six years of age he could draw from recollection the likeness of any one with whose face he was acquainted. At thirteen he was apprenticed to a bookseller in Philadelphia, but his *spécialité* was drawing; and he employed all his spare time in improving himself in his favourite pursuit. He delighted in theatrical entertainments; and so great were his powers of observation, and so extraordinary was his imitative skill, that he could make water-colour drawings of all the scenes in the

drama he had been witnessing, and introduce excellent likenesses of the actors in their respective characters. His portrait of Cooke, in the character of Richard III., attracted so much attention, that his friends, convinced at length of his talent for portrait painting, yielded to his entreaties, and allowed him to follow the profession of an artist. His indentures were cancelled, and he was sent to England, with the view of giving him every opportunity for cultivating his taste for art under the best masters. He had, however, profited by the valuable instructions of Mr. Sully in oil painting before he left America, and shortly after his arrival in London he sent home to Philadelphia his first piece in this style, entitled "Walter of Deloraine," from Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel." This picture is now in the Academy at Philadelphia. Having realised fame and fortune among the "Britishers," Mr. Leslie made England the country of his adoption, and, indeed, with the exception of a few months passed at West-point, in 1832, he has resided constantly in London. His merits secured him, long ago, the coveted title of Royal Academician, and his professional career has been both lucrative and honourable.

His most celebrated pictures are: "May-Day in the Reign of Elizabeth;" "Ann Page and Slender," recently sold in New York; "Sancho Relating his Adventures to the Duchess;" "Falstaff Dining at Page's House;" "Touchstone and Audrey;" "A Portrait of Sir Walter Scott," now in possession of Mr. Ticknor, of Boston; "The Coronation of Queen Victoria;" "Christening of the Princess Royal;" "Visit of Lady Blarney and Miss Skeggs to the Vicar of Wakefield's Family;" and "The Reading of the Will of Roderick Random's Grandfather."

#### "SANCHO PANZA."

The picture from which this engraving is copied represents that amusing personage, Sancho Panza, as governor of the island of Barataria. His attendants have placed before him many delicacies, of which Don Quixote's hungry squire is anxious to partake. The court doctor is at hand to remove the tempting morsel, just as poor Sancho is about to swallow it. "My lord," said the wand-bearer, "your lordship's food must here be watched with the same care as is customary with the governors of other islands. I am a doctor of physic, sir; and my duty, for which I receive a salary, is to attend to the governor's health, whereof I am more careful than of my own. I study his constitution night and day, that I may know how to restore him when sick; and, therefore, think it incumbent on me to pay special regard to his meals, at which I constantly preside, to see that he eats what is good and salutary, and prevent his touching whatever I imagine may be prejudicial to his health or offensive to his stomach. It is for that reason, my lord, I ordered the dish of fruit to be taken away, as being too watery, and that other dish as being too hot and over-seasoned with spices, which are apt to provoke thirst; and he that drinks much destroys and consumes the radical moisture, which is the fuel of life." "Well, then," quoth Sancho, "that plate of roasted partridges, which seem to me to be very well seasoned, I suppose will do me no manner of harm." "Hold," said the doctor, "my lord governor shall not eat them, while I live to prevent it." "Pray, why not?" quoth Sancho. "Because," answered the doctor, "our great master, Hippocrates, says in one of his aphorisms, 'Omnis saturatio mala, perdis autem pessima'—all repletion is bad, but that from partridges the worst." "If it be so," quoth Sancho, "pray cast your eye, senor doctor, over all these dishes here on the table, and see which will do me the most good or the least harm, and let me eat of it, without whisking it away with your conjuring stick; for, by my soul, and as God shall give me life to enjoy this government, I am dying with hunger; and to deny me food—let senor doctor say what he will—is not the way to lengthen my life, but to cut it short." "Your worship is in the right, my lord governor," answered the physician; "and, therefore, I am of opinion you should not eat of those stewed rabbits, as being a food that is tough and acute; of that veal, indeed, you might have taken a little, had it been neither roasted nor stewed—but as it is, not a morsel." "What think you, then," said Sancho, "of that huge dish there smoking hot, which I take to be an olla podrida; for among the many things contained in it I surely may light upon something both wholesome and toothsome." "Absit," quoth the doctor—"far be such a thought from us. Olla podrida! there is no worse dish in the world. Leave them to the prebends and rectors of colleges, or lusty feeders at country weddings; but let them not be seen on the tables of governors, where nothing contrary to health and delicacy should be tolerated. Simple medicines are always more estimable and safe, for in them there can be no mistake; whereas in such as are compounded all is hazard and uncer-



KALAMANDRETTA

A PEASANT BOY. FROM A PAINTING BY RICHARD WESTALL, R.A.



ANTHONY VANDYCK. FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF



THE CRUCIFIXION. BY VANDYCK.

tainty. Therefore, what I would at present advise my lord governor to eat, in order to corroborate and preserve his health, is about one hundred small rolled-up wafers, with some thin slices of marmalade, that may sit easy upon the stomach and help digestion."

#### "THE RIVALS."

Leslie is the only imaginative illustrator we have of Shakespeare and Molière. His "Merry Wives of Windsor," "Autolycus," "Perdita," "Sir Toby and Sir Andrew," "Beatrice," "Falstaff personating the King," "Juliet," &c. &c., are not only intrinsically good as works of art, but they convey, in the most pleasing form, original readings of the meaning of our great dramatist. "The Bourgeois Gentilhomme with the Fencer," "The Malade Imaginaire," and "The Femmes Savantes," reveal his intimate knowledge, not only of the merits and meaning of Molière, but of the disposition and habits of the French people. His pencil embellishes every subject it illustrates, and adds point and meaning to the description of his author. In "The Rivals," he has greatly improved upon the scene from which he borrowed his subject. The

struggles of the aged beau, whose sinews and joints have lost all the suppleness of youth, to recover his innamorata's fan, are pitifully ludicrous, and convey an excellent satire upon the folly of age aping the manners of youth. There is an old French distich peculiarly applicable to the condition of this *ex-devant jeune homme*:—

“Laissez à la belle jeunesse  
Ces folâtres enjouements :  
Qui de son âge n'a pas l'esprit,  
De son âge a tout le tourment.”

[ANGLICAN.]

Leave to youth's impetuous days  
What in youth so sweet appears :  
Graybeards aping lovers' ways  
Doubly feel the weight of years.

While the antiquated suitor is *hors de combat* through his forced attempt at gallantry, his youthful rival is improving his opportunity.

His domestic scenes are remarkable for their pathos and sentiment. His “Mother and Child,” “Children at Play,” and “The Shell,” are gems in this style; and in some few instances Leslie has shown a capacity for treating religious subjects, in a manner at once touching and edifying.

## JAMES BURNET.



JAMES BURNET, a landscape painter of considerable merit, was born at Musselburgh, in the year 1788. He was the fourth son of George Burnet, general Surveyor of Excise, in Scotland, and of Ann Cruikshank, his wife. His brother John was famous as an engraver and draughtsman; and several other members of the family were distinguished either in literature or art.

Like most men of genius, Burnet owed more to the instructions of his mother than to any other sources of education. The prophetic instinct of maternal affection discovered at once the bent of the young artist's mind; and, at his mother's instigation, he was placed under the care of Liddell, to learn wood-carving, a branch of art which, during the last century, must have been highly lucrative, as the elaborate ornamentation of the various articles of furniture then in fashion still testifies. During his apprenticeship to Liddell, Burnet employed his leisure hours in studying drawing at the “Trustees' Academy,” under Graham, where he was distinguished above his fellow-students for the truthfulness of his delineations.

Entertaining a well-founded confidence in his own powers, he joined his brother in London, in 1810. Our artist was then in his twenty-second year, full of hope, and glowing with youthful enthusiasm. Wilkie's *chef-d'œuvre* of “The Blind Fiddler,” which his brother was engraving at the time, excited the admiration of the young artist to the highest pitch; and he determined if possible to form his style of drawing upon the model of the Scotch painter. The study of some of the Dutch masters in the British Gallery confirmed him in his admiration of Wilkie. Potter and Cuyp were his models in landscape; but in all his best pieces he contrived, like Wilkie, to make his picture tell its own story. The first piece of his which bears unmistakable evidence of the sources from which he had borrowed his style, was “Cattle going out in the morning.” The picture has great merit. The cattle seem to rejoice in their release from their stall, and to revel in the richness of the pastures and in the dewy freshness of the morning. In his “Cattle returning home in a shower,” “he has introduced,” says a celebrated critic, “everything that could in any way characterise the scene. The rainbow in the sky, the glittering of the rain upon the leaves, the dripping poultry under the hedge, the reflections of the cattle on the road, and the girl with her gown over her shoulders, all tend with equal

force to illustrate his subject." This picture established his reputation as a painter of pastoral scenes. Those which followed still farther enhanced his fame—"The Key of the Byre," "Crossing the Brook," "Cowboys and Cattle," "Breaking the Ice," "Milking," "Crossing the Bridge," "Inside of a Cow-house," "Boy with Cows," &c. &c. Many of these pictures are in the possession of the painter's relatives; but for some of them large sums were paid by the Earl of Coventry, the Earl of Egremont, and the Marquis Camden.

Burnet's pictures are remarkable for the beauty of their skyey colouring; and as he succeeded so well in this important portion of his landscape, we will quote a few of his critical observations. "The sky," says he, "being of a receding character, all those points which contribute to give it such character should be the study of the painter. Mere white, for example, will seldom keep its place in a sky; but it ought to be used in foreground objects, for the purpose of giving a retiring quality to the whites in the sky and distance. Softness of form also aids in giving the sky a retiring character; although it is necessary to give a little sharpness, to prevent the sky appearing what is termed woolly; yet very little is sufficient to give firmness to the whole. Clouds are much more opaque in the north than in the south, as the light shines upon them in the one situation, and through them in the other. Their form alters much, too, according to the time of day: at noon they are round, and more like those of Wouvermans; in the evening they are more like those of Cuyper or Both, especially about an hour before the sun goes down." The following comments upon the pictures of Wilson in the British Institution are of the date of May, 1814. "I observed," he says, "some pictures more pleasing than others; those which seemed most so were light pictures with warm foregrounds falling into a cool sky and a distance, the middle-ground mostly in shadow, of a purple-gray, with yellow and green touches through it; a piece of blue drapery in the foreground gives great value. Of all things, Wilson seems careful to keep a proper balance of hot and cold colour, and of light and shade, with very little positive colour, and little of black or white, but always some of each."

Had this promising young painter lived to carry out all the excellent principles with which his mind was stored, there is no doubt that he would have attained the highest rank among the artists of his time. But a lingering consumption—that disease so fatal in this climate—was gradually sapping the springs of life. He tried change of air, but all to no purpose; he grew visibly thinner and weaker, and although he kept up his cheerfulness to the last, he was fully aware that the hand of death was upon him. He expired on the 27th of July, 1816, aged twenty-eight years. He had often expressed a wish to be buried in the church of Lee, which forms the background of several of his pictures, but some parochial regulations prevented his relations from fulfilling this his last request, and he was in consequence interred in Lewisham burial-ground.

#### "THE ORPHAN BIRD."

The picture from which this engraving is copied reminds us forcibly of Wilkie. The grouping is quite in the Scotch painter's style, and there is a whole history attached to the capture and treatment of the "Orphan Bird." The interior, with all its various implements of agricultural labour and its utensils of rustic economy, has a Wilkie air about it that is quite unmistakable.

---

### RICHARD WESTALL, R.A.

---

THIS celebrated artist was born in 1765, and was early bound apprentice to a silverplate engraver, in Gutter-lane, where he formed an acquaintance with the celebrated portrait painter, Thomas Lawrence. The intimacy between the artists soon ripened into friendship; and so inseparable were they that they hired a house between them, in Greek-street, Soho. Westall devoted himself almost exclusively to the illustration of the British poets, and in this style he has never been surpassed, or even equalled. The first production of his which established his fame as an artist was a picture exhibited in 1785, representing a scene from Chaucer's "January and May." "Mary Queen of Scots taking leave of Andrew Marvel," "Fanny asking for his Father's Blessing," and a scene from "The Wife of Bath's Tale," followed in rapid

succession. In the illustrations of Milton which he executed for Alderman Boydell, the founder of the Shakespearian Gallery, he seems to have caught the inspiration of the subject, and to have shared in the sublimity and grandeur of the poet. He also executed some illustrations of Shakespeare for the alderman, but they were only moderately good.

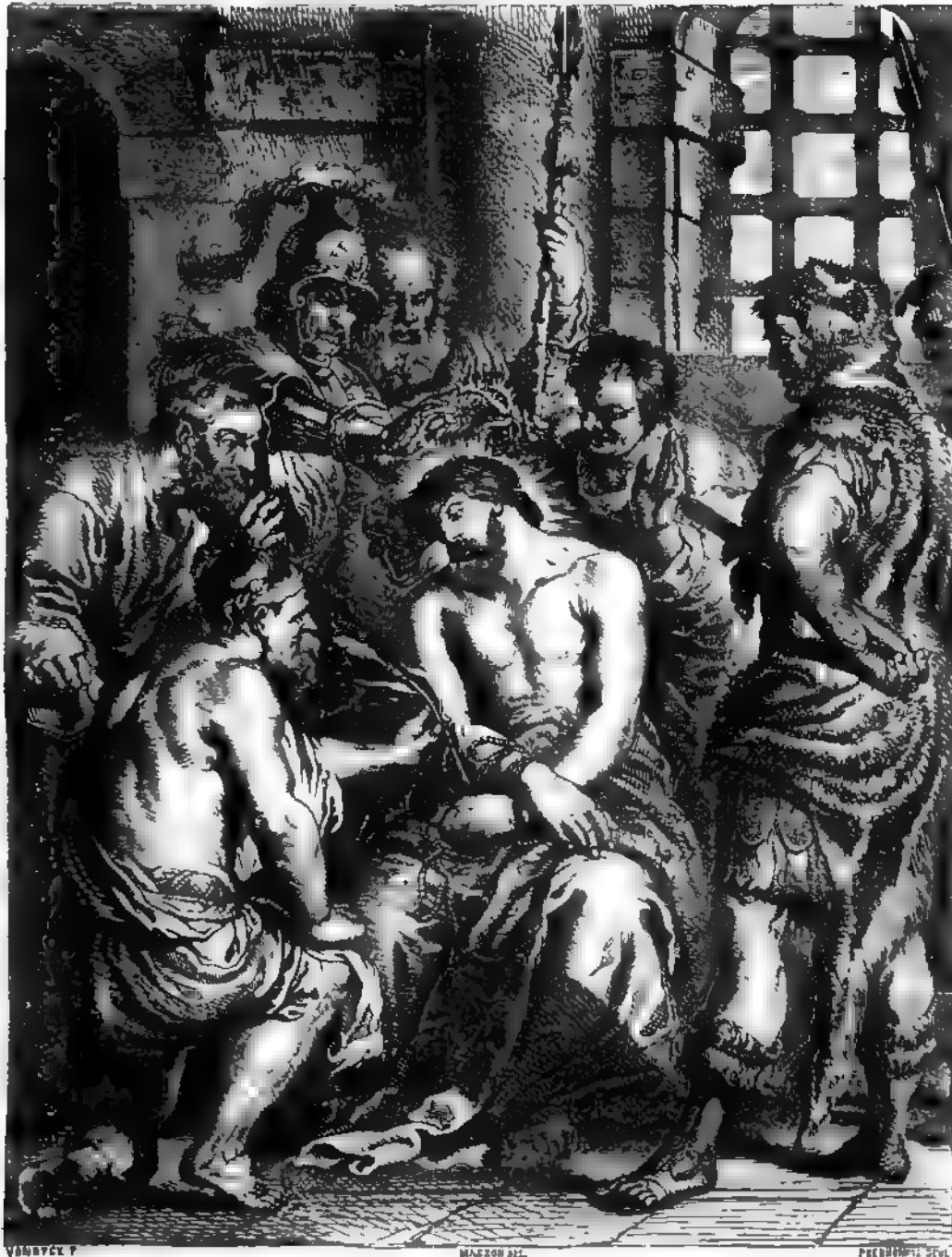


MADONNA AND CHILD. FROM A PAINTING BY VAN DYCK.

(Contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by the late J. Smith Barry, Esq.)

The success of Westall's Milton made him very popular with the booksellers, who encumbered him with orders; but there is a want of vigour in his style, for which the refinement and grace of his conceptions can never entirely atone. He was elected a member of the Royal Academy in the year 1794 and in 1808 he published a volume of poems entitled "A Day in Spring." He had the honour of





THE CROWN OF THORNS. FROM A PAINTING BY VANDYCK.

imparting to Her Gracious Majesty the Queen the first rudiments of drawing; and, whatever may have been his own shortcomings, his pupil does credit to her instructor. He managed to realise a considerable fortune by his professional skill, but he lost it all through the frauds of men who foisted upon him as originals clever copies of the great masters. He was long a pensioner on the bounty of the Royal Academy, and died, in extreme poverty, on the 4th of December, 1836.

"THE PLEASANT BOY."

The picture from which our engraving is copied is one of Westall's masterpieces. The position of the figure in the foreground is highly artistic and natural, and the dog is, in expression and attitude, worthy of the pencil of Landseer.

ANTHONY VANDYCK.



VANDYCK was born in Antwerp in 1599. He perhaps owed the early development of his predilection for art to his father's calling—that of a painter on glass—and his mother's taste, which led her to embroider designs both in landscapes and figures, some of which she executed with great skill. She was glad to find that her son was disposed to follow the same bent as herself, and gave him all the instruction in her power, and induced his father to place him in the studio of Henry Van Balen, a historical painter of some repute, who had studied under Rubens. While here, he of course became familiar with the works of the latter; and such was the admiration which he conceived for this great man, that he could not rest satisfied until he obtained admission to his school, in 1615. He proved himself in every way worthy of the privileges which he now enjoyed. His assiduity, zeal, and attention attracted the notice of his master, and caused him to bestow on him a greater amount of teaching and encouragement than his other pupils ordinarily met with. He evinced his confidence in him by employing him very soon in making the drawings of his own works from which the engravings were to be taken. His fellow-students, however, were not less forward in acknowledging his talents than Rubens himself, as was shown by a well-authenticated anecdote.

During the absence of their master, the pupils were in the habit of persuading his old servant to admit them into his painting room, that they might inspect his works as they progressed. On one occasion, however, the easel was thrown down, and, to their great consternation, the painting was seriously injured. After consulting as to the course to be adopted, they resolved to request Vandyck to repair the damage. He reluctantly consented to make the attempt, and with such success that his comrades declared they could not distinguish his workmanship from the remainder. When Rubens returned, however, he at once detected the difference, summoned them all before him, and questioned them as to the cause of the alterations. They frankly confessed the truth, and the matter was passed over without any further notice or remark.

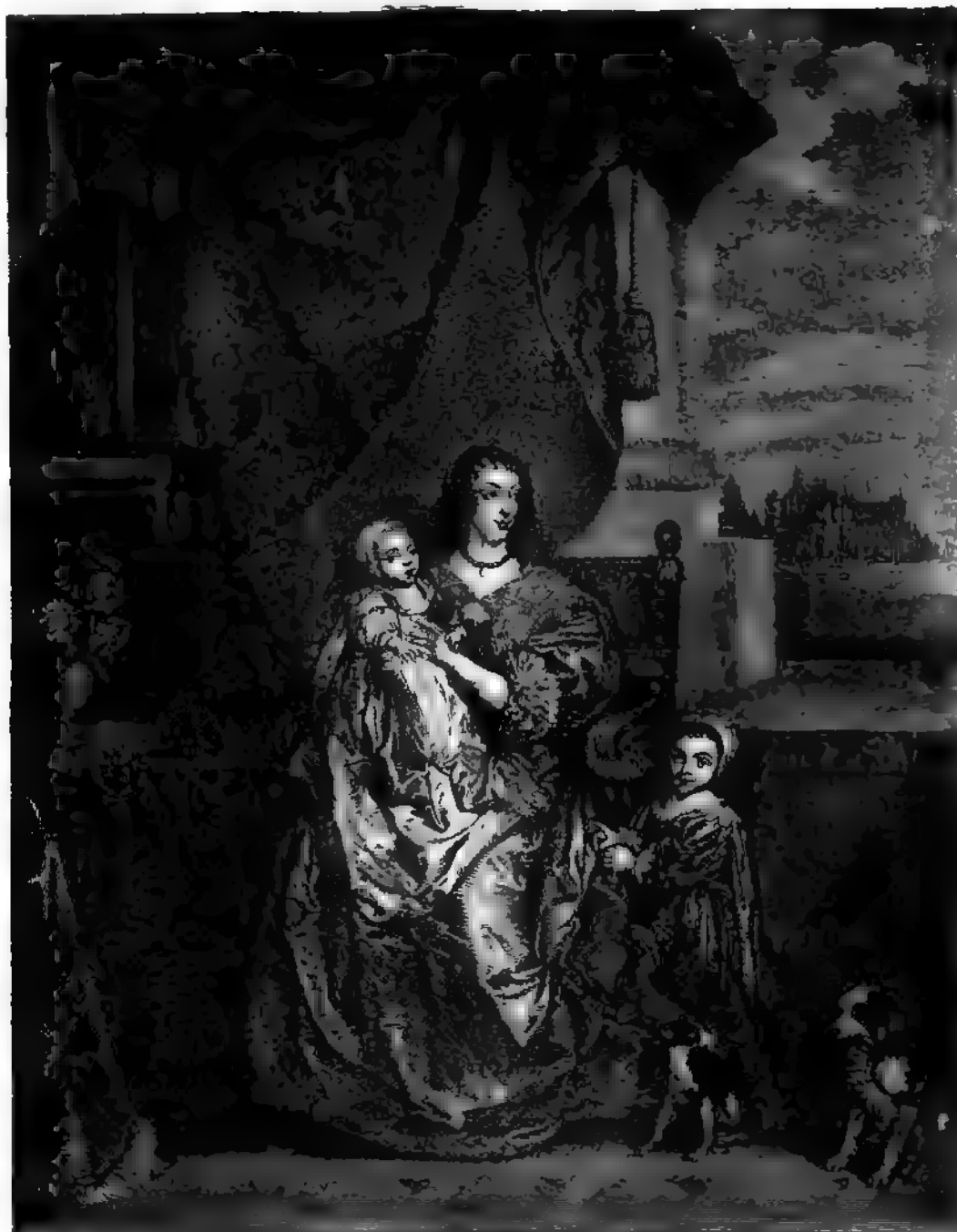
When Vandyck had made considerable progress, Rubens advised him to visit Italy, where he would acquire just and pure notions of form from the remains of Greek and Roman sculpture, and could study the application of those principles of art which he had already learned in the great works of the Italian masters. As a proof of his esteem, Rubens presented him, when leaving his school, with three of the finest of his own paintings,—an "Ecce Homo," a portrait of his wife, and a night scene representing the seizure of Jesus in the garden of the Mount of Olives; and also with one of his most valuable horses. It does not appear, however, that Vandyck followed his advice as to the journey to Italy; because we find that he was so flattered by the invitation of the Earl of Arundel to come to England, that he accepted it. There is a great difference of opinion amongst his biographers as to whether he came direct to England after leaving the studio of Rubens, or first paid a visit to France; but from an order for the payment of £100 to Vandyck for special services rendered to Charles I., bearing date 1630, it seems likely that he first visited England. Whether this £100 was a gratuity, or was a regular payment for work and labour done, does not appear. A "Head of James I." in the collection at Windsor, has by some been supposed to be the production for which the sum was paid. The only

other work of this period which is attributed to him with any show of proof, is a portrait of the "Earl of Arundel," his patron, which was engraved by Hollar.

He took his departure from England on the 28th of February, 1620 (o.s.), and in a pass given him to enable him to embark, he is designated one of "his Majesty's servants," and he is described as having obtained leave of absence for eight months; from which it may be inferred that he had obtained a regular engagement from the king. He now made his way once more to Flanders, where, however, he was destined to offer up his devotions at the shrine of another deity than Apollo. He fell desperately in love with a young country-girl residing in the village of Lavelthem, near Brussels, named Anna Van Ophem. So powerful a hold did his passion acquire over him, that he was unable to tear himself away from the presence of his charmer for a considerable length of time. Month after month passed away in "dalliance sweet," and Italy seemed to be totally lost sight of. By the persuasions of the fair Anna, however, he painted two pictures for the parish church, one of them representing "St. Martin," the patron saint, on horseback, dividing his cloak with a beggar. The saint was a portrait of Vandyck himself, and the horse of the one which Rubens had presented him with. The same subject had been previously treated by Rubens almost in the same manner. The parish authorities some time afterwards disposed of it to a M. Huet, of the Hague; but as soon as the villagers heard of it, they rose in arms, and resisted all attempts to remove it, with such vigour that the purchasers had to fly in order to save their lives. Similar zeal in its defence was manifested at a more recent period; when in 1806 the French seized upon it, the inhabitants offered so strenuous a resistance, that a reinforcement of troops had to be sent down from Brussels before it could be carried away. It remained in the Louvre until 1815, when the allied armies entered Paris and restored it to the rightful owners.

As soon as Rubens heard of his pupil's infatuation, he hastened down to Lavelthem, and succeeded in rousing him to a remembrance of art and fame, and inducing him to break the silken chains which bound him. He took a hasty leave of his mistress, and started off for Italy. He first directed his steps to Venice, attracted by the reputation of the colourists of that school, whose manner his master had admired and to some extent adopted. He paid particular attention to the works of Giorgione and Titian, and occupied himself mainly in copying and studying them, until the low state of his funds obliged him to set out for Genoa. This city was at this period at the height of its celebrity, and was the abode of the wealthiest nobles and merchants in Europe. Rubens had been received in it with great favour, so that his pupil visited it under auspicious circumstances, and his own graceful manners and rising talents as a portrait painter confirmed the good impressions formed regarding him from his master's *prestige*. The Spinola, Raggi, Brignoli, Pallavicino, and Balbi families eagerly availed themselves of his services, and their palaces still contain some of the best specimens of his works.

From Genoa he proceeded to Rome, and while there was a guest in the palace of Cardinal Bentivoglio, who, from his long residence in Flanders, was very fond of Flemings. By his order Vandyck painted a "Crucifixion," and a full-length portrait of himself. The latter is considered one of his best works; the colouring bears evidence to the benefits he derived from his residence in Venice. In the pontifical palace there is an "Ascension" and an "Adoration of the Magi" by him, which, it is presumed, were painted by a commission from the Pope. Many other works executed at this period are still to be found in the palaces of the nobles. His stay at Rome only lasted two years, and its termination was owing, it is said, to the ill-concealed dislike of the Flemish artists residing there. They appear to have been mostly men of dissipated habits, pothouse frequenters and tipplers, passing their time in modes altogether foreign to Vandyck's tastes, who had a good deal of the fine gentleman in his composition, even if his natural good sense had not shown him that coarse sensualism is fatal to excellence in any walk of life. He was fond of fine dress and grand equipages too, which led his countrymen to believe him proud, and from this to calumniating and depreciating him there was but one step. They declared that his drawing was wretched, and his colouring worse. Disgusted by their conduct, Vandyck left Rome and returned to Genoa, whence he shortly after passed over into Sicily. While in Palermo, he painted the portrait of the celebrated blind paintress, Soffonisba Angosciola, then in her ninety-first year. Vandyck appears to have derived great enjoyment from her society, as he afterwards declared that he had received more instruction in his art from a blind woman than from the works of the most celebrated painters. He left Sicily in haste, in consequence of the outbreak of the plague. During his rambles on the Continent, he met the Countess of Arundel travelling with



A. PAQUER, O.

L. ARONHEAU, SC.

QUEEN HENRIETTA MARIA AND FAMILY. FROM A PAINTING BY VANDYCK.

her two sons. She begged of him to return with her to England, but he declined and returned to Genoa.

After a short residence in Florence, of which little is known, making his stay in Italy on the whole five years, he once more bent his steps towards home, where he had every reason to expect a cordial welcome, as his fame had already reached Antwerp, and the citizens were naturally disposed to do him

all honour. As soon as he made his appearance he was overwhelmed with commissions. The first work of importance which he undertook was an altar-piece for the church of the Augustines, representing "St. Augustine in Ecstasy, surrounded by Angels." Sir Joshua Reynolds condemns it, because it wants any large mass of light; but this was not so much the painter's fault as that of the monks, who insisted on his making the saint's garment black, instead of light, as he had originally intended it. Another instance of equally mischievous interference occurred with regard to a painting, the subject of



THE MYSTIC MARRIAGE. FROM A PAINTING BY VANDYCK.

which was "The Raising of the Cross," which he was to execute for the canons of the collegiate church of Courtray. To give his countrymen a full idea of his powers, he resolved to exert himself to the uttermost upon this work, and succeeded to his own satisfaction. On taking it to the church, the canons, instead of allowing him to put it up at once in the place it was intended to occupy, insisted upon having it unpacked before their eyes, that they might at once form a judgment upon its merits. After remonstrating in vain, he complied with their request. They glanced at the canvas contemp-

tuously, declared that the Saviour's head was like that of a porter, and that the others were masks, and turning upon their heels, told Vandyck that he himself was a mere dauber, and left him. The picture was, however, put up, but the canons, in their cross stupidity, refused to come and look at it again. The painter was, however, not long in getting justice: connoisseurs saw it, artists saw it, travellers saw it, and the voices of all competent to form an opinion were unanimous in its favour. The canons now found themselves in an awkward position; but they were either cowardly or magnanimous enough to join in the general admiration, and, as some amends for their former insults, met in full conclave, and commissioned him to paint two other pictures. He sent back their order with a contemptuous refusal, telling them there were enough daubers in Courtray without sending to Antwerp for them.

Vandyck stayed in Flanders about five years after his return from Italy, and during the whole of this time was very busily employed. Thirty pictures, at least, were painted by him for various churches and chapels, in addition to a great number of portraits of the most celebrated men and women of the age—the Archduchess Isabella of Austria, the Cardinal Infanta of Spain, the Queen-Mother of France, and her son Gaston, Duke of Orleans, both of whom were then residing in exile at Brussels; equestrian portraits of the Prince Thomas of Savoy, the Duke of Arenberg, the Duke of Alva, Antonius Triest, Bishop of Ghent, and the Abbé Scaglia. He also painted portraits of most of the leading generals who fought in the Thirty Years' War—Gustavus Adolphus, Wallenstein, Pappenheim, Tilly, the Emperor Ferdinand, and others.

Passing over a hasty visit to the Netherlands, during which he painted portraits of the Prince and Princess of Orange and their family, we shall proceed to notice Vandyck's residence in England, as the period of his life possessing, doubtless, most interest for our readers. The immediate cause of his coming over is not known; there are no traces of a direct invitation from the king, but it is more than probable that the sudden restoration of his patron, the Earl of Arundel, to the favour of Charles I., which he had lost by the marriage of his eldest son, Lord Maltravers, with the Lady Elizabeth Stuart, daughter of Esme, Duke of Lennox, had something to do with it. He arrived in London in the beginning of April, 1632, and met with a very cordial welcome from the king, who assigned him apartments in the Blackfriars and a summer residence at Eltham, and appointed him principal painter in ordinary to their Majesties. Within three months after his arrival he conferred upon him the honour of knighthood, accompanied by the gift of a gold chain, to which was attached the royal portrait set in brilliants. By this time he had painted the family group containing Charles, his wife, and children, which now hangs in the Vandyck room of Windsor Castle. He was henceforth kept in constant employment either by the king or by the nobility; and in October, 1633, the former settled a pension of £200 a year upon him—a large sum according to the value of money at that day; and this, combined with his private earnings, enabled him to gratify his extraordinary love of display, a failing which he must have contracted by his residence with Rubens, who was very wealthy.

His establishment was now kept up on a scale of gorgeous magnificence, as he aspired to rival the court nobility in dress, equipage, and entertainment. He made a practice of inviting all those who came to sit for their portraits to remain and dine with him afterwards, so that he might have an opportunity of observing their expression more closely, and amending his sketch. He was very fond of music, and affected to be a great patron of those who made it their profession. Owing to the king's custom of rowing down to his house in his barge, and sitting with him for hours at a time in his studio, it became the fashion amongst the nobility to do the same. His house consequently became a regular place of resort—a species of morning lounge for the fine gentlemen of the day. As they were, of course, all given to gallantry and intrigue, Vandyck must needs be so too, and managed to spend very large sums of money upon divers fair ones, whose favours he enjoyed. The natural consequence of all this folly was, that his constitution began to give way, being undermined by luxurious habits, indolence, and dissipation, and his circumstances becoming embarrassed, he is said to have been silly enough to seek to retrieve his fortunes by the aid of the philosopher's stone, for which he searched diligently for a long while, we need hardly say, in vain.

The king saw what a sad life his favourite was leading, and wisely concluded that the best remedy for all bachelor ailments was matrimony. He accordingly got him married to Miss Maria Ruthven, the daughter of an eminent physician, who had suffered a long imprisonment in the Tower, during the

preceding reign, upon a false charge of treason. The lady was poor, but high-born, and she and Vandyck, for aught we know to the contrary, lived very happily together.

The painter now applied himself almost wholly to portrait painting, and neglected history. There are few old families in England which cannot show one or more portraits of their ancestors from this painter's hand. He, however, executed a good many historical pictures, most of them New Testament subjects, for his kind patron, Sir Kenelm Digby; but he aspired to something which should prove a still better exposition of his talents than anything he had yet achieved.

Rubens had painted some splendid pictures upon the ceiling of the banqueting-room at Whitehall, and their richness was so great, that something of the same kind was evidently needed upon the walls also. Vandyck therefore proposed to the king, through Sir Kenelm Digby, to execute a series of pictures illustrative of the history of the order of the garter. The scheme pleased the king, and he ordered the designs to be prepared forthwith, with the intention of having them worked in tapestry; but upon coming to calculate the expense, he found it would amount to £75,000, an enormous sum, considering the then state of the exchequer, which the people of England had made up their minds upon no account to replenish till Charles began to mend his manners and reduce their grievances. So Vandyck's proposal was laid aside for the present. The same sad necessity caused the prices which he charged for the pictures executed for the royal family to be cut down greatly; and altogether, between bad health and pecuniary embarrassment and the political troubles, the period between 1635 and 1640 was a dull time enough for Sir Anthony Vandyck. To shake off his melancholy, he undertook a journey to Paris, hoping to obtain employment at the grand gallery of the Louvre, which Louis XIII. was then about to decorate with paintings; but in this he was disappointed, and returned to England after a sojourn of two months in the French capital.

He found but a poor prospect before him here. The Parliament and the Roundheads were carrying things with a high hand, and were certainly inspired with no love for such ungodly vanities as painting. In March, 1647, Vandyck saw the royal family, who had so long been his kind friends, dispersed; and his patron, the Earl of Strafford, was brought to the scaffold in the May following. One calamity followed another; gaieties were over; the nobility had weightier business on hand than getting their portraits painted. London was filled with stern Puritans, who never lounged in studios. So Vandyck did what was very natural under the circumstances—became sick unto death. Charles had just returned from Scotland, and on hearing of the illness of his old friend, offered a gratuity of one hundred pounds to the physician if he succeeded in saving his life. It was all in vain, however. The gossip of courts, the favour or neglect of princes, the breath of popular applause or civil discord could trouble him no more. He died in December, 1641, at the early age of forty-two, and lies buried in the north side of the choir of St. Paul's Cathedral, near the tomb of John of Gaunt.

He had one daughter by his wife, named Justiniana, who married Sir John Stepney, of Prendergast, Pembrokeshire. Their last descendant, Sir Thomas Stepney, died in September, 1825.

From Vandyck's portraits we learn that he was handsome, lively, and intelligent-looking. From contemporary chronicles and gossip we learn that he was graceful in his carriage, and winning in his manner. He was generous to a fault, extremely sensitive, and, as we have already said, was vain and fond of show.

Many of his historical paintings displayed the highest skill. One of them, "Christ Crucified between Two Thieves," Sir Joshua Reynolds pronounced one of the finest pictures in the world. His heads always display wonderful expression, deep pathos, and a refinement carried in some instances to the verge of delicacy. But to see him in his glory, we must traverse the galleries of our old nobility, and see his knights and dames of the seventeenth century looking down on us from the blackened canvas, with their grand air, their haughty but not unpleasing dignity.

#### HIS PORTRAIT.

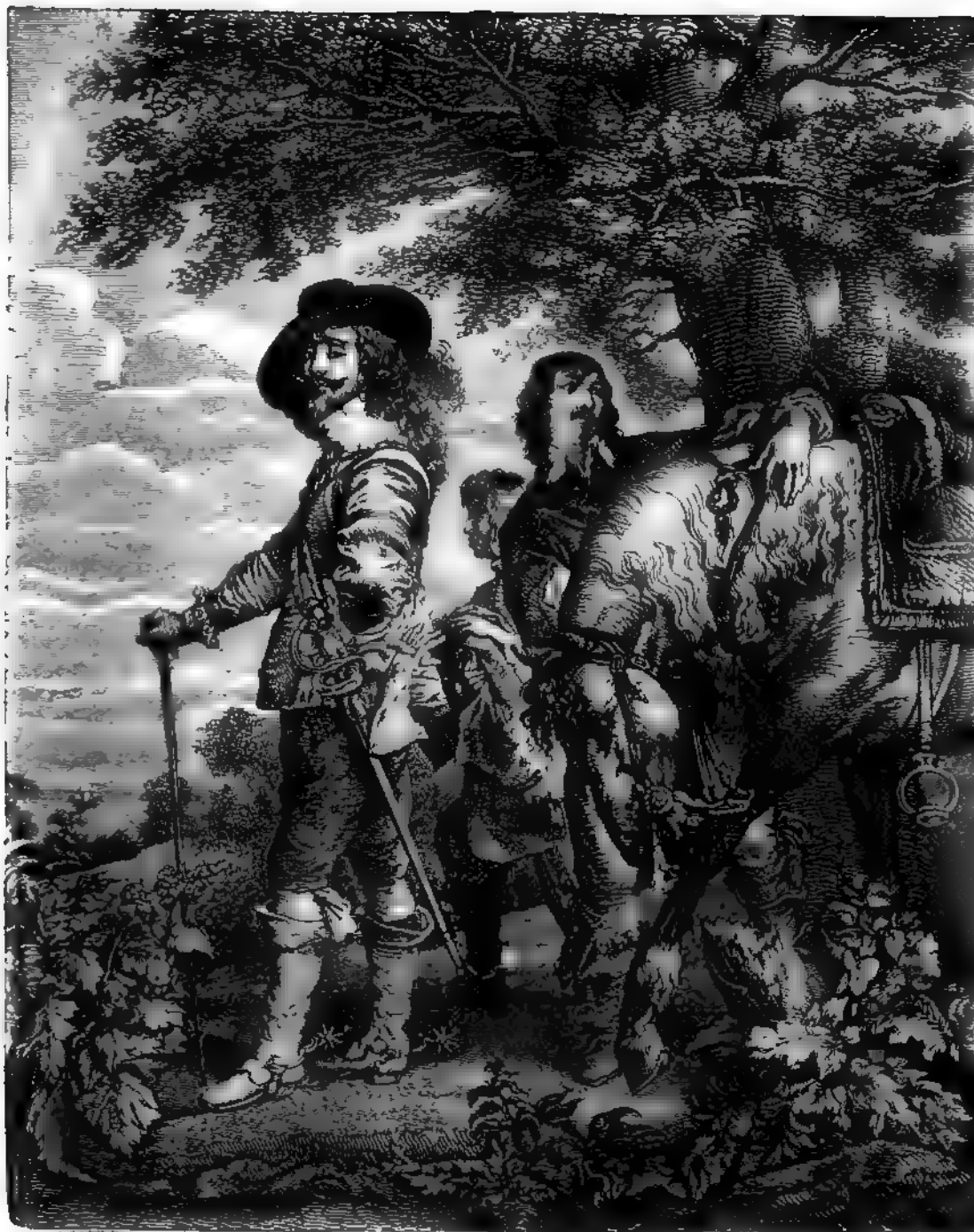
Anthony Vandyck was in person tall, handsome, elegant, and distinguished for that *je ne sais quoi* which constitutes the gentleman. When he returned to England in the year 1629, after an absence of ten years, he became the idol of fashionable society in London, at that time the most exclusive and aristocratic in the world. The innate elegance of his manners and bearing, the grace and sym-



VAN DER BORCHT. FROM A PAINTING BY VANDYCK.

metry of his form, and the noble cast of his features, ingratiated him immediately with Charles I., who felt as great an admiration for the man as he did for the painter. The King had planned building a mansion expressly for Vandyck, as the following entry in a journal kept by the Queen proves: "To speak to Inigo Jones about a mansion for Vandyck." Charles never had an opportunity of realising





CHARLES I. FROM A PAINTING BY VANDYCK.

this project, but he assigned to his favourite painter a winter residence at Blackfriars and a summer villa at Eltham. The expression of Vandyck's face is peculiarly pleasing; a high forehead, large and brilliant eyes, a well-formed nose, and lips curved and expressive, with a chin that denoted energy of purpose and great decision of character. With all these personal advantages, set off as they were by

a peculiar fascination of manner and the *prestige* of genius, he could not fail to be a great favourite with the fair sex, who, in England more than elsewhere, are ever ready to acknowledge the claims of genius.

The beauties of the court of Charles I., haughty and disdainful to others, were courteous, kind, and condescending to Vandyck. Like all men of genius, he was a passionate admirer of female loveliness; and as the fairest forms that ever graced a drawing-room frequented his *atelier*, in the *abandon* of their admiration of his art and friendship for his person, he was several times the victim of their charms. Lady Stanhope, whom he admired at one time more than any of the rest, and whose portrait he reproduced in every possible style, was attached to Carey Raleigh. The likenesses which Vandyck, in the ardour of his love, embellished with all the resources of his art, she only used for the purpose of exciting the admiration of her lover. Love, however, like friendship, only exists where there is reciprocity, and Vandyck, meeting with no return, transferred his attentions to Margaret Leman, a famous courtesan of the time. This *innamorata* was of so jealous a disposition, that when the painter eventually married Maria Ruthven, she determined, out of revenge, to cut off his thumb, and thus put an effectual stop to his painting and popularity. He managed, however, to baffle her vengeance, and Margaret Leman, after a new *liaison* with an officer who perished in battle, died by her own hand.

#### "MADONNA AND CHILD."

In the picture from which this engraving is copied, contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by J. Smith Barry, Esq., Vandyck has reproduced in his "Madonna" the features of a young girl of the name of Anna Von Ophem, to whom he was in early youth devotedly attached. The pupil of Rubens, whose style and colouring he endeavoured to rival, if not surpass, Vandyck executed many sacred subjects in a manner worthy of his great master. His "Madonna and Child," though an early production, is remarkable for the saintlike tenderness of the expression, and the heavenly beauty of the features of the face.

One of the sacred subjects which Vandyck painted about the same time—"Christ in the Garden of Olives"—was so much admired by Rubens, who was most lavish in his praises of it both at home and abroad, that Vandyck presented it to his master, and Rubens in return gave his pupil the best horse in his stable.

At the time that Vandyck painted his "Madonna and Child," he had not as yet made the galleries of Venice the objects of his enthusiastic study, or imbued his style with the spirit and tints of Titian, who, at that time still in his prime, was the acknowledged prince of colourists. He gave an additional warmth and brilliancy to the tone of the Flemish School, and borrowed his rays of beauty from the sun of the great Venetian master. At Venice, then a flourishing commercial city, he was courted by all that was noble and eminent in rank, fortune, and talent. He greatly improved his style of portrait painting by the study of Titian's originals. His manner became more refined, and to a Rubens foundation he added a Titian superstructure. This picture was sold to Lord Netsford for £1,890.

#### "THE CROWN OF THORNS."

No painter of any school, whether national or foreign, has left behind him such admirable representations of the Saviour. "The Crown of Thorns" unites all the peculiar excellences of this great master. There is a sublimity of resignation in the expression of Christ, and at the same time a grandeur and divinity, which cannot fail to impress the most careless or irreligious spectator. He seems in all his representations of "the Son of Man" to have been inspired with a kind of holy fire. Whether he represents Him alone on the mountains, in the solemnity of night, with the black canopy of the heavens above Him, while Jerusalem looms from afar in the dismal twilight, or whether we behold Him in the majesty of death, stretched at length on the lap of the Holy Virgin, who, like Rachel weeping for her children, will not be comforted because He is not,—everywhere the figure of the Saviour is instinct with the same inexpressible divinity of feature and of form. There is, indeed, nothing in the whole range of art more touching to contemplate than the appearance of the Son of Man, as represented by Vandyck, alone on Golgotha, deserted by his disciples, in darkness and in suffering.

"QUEEN HENRIETTA MARIA AND FAMILY."

England is rich in the productions of the great Flemish master. At Windsor Castle the Vandyck Gallery contains the finest collection in the world of his paintings. When Vandyck was settled in England as painter in ordinary to the King, his first duty and occupation was to reproduce, in great numbers and in every possible variety, the likenesses of the King, the Queen, and their children. In the picture we are now analysing the Queen Henrietta Maria holds in her arms the young Princess Maria, while the unfortunate Henrietta of Orleans is at her side. The dogs—an Italian greyhound and two of that breed of spaniels which takes its name from the unhappy monarch—add to the domestic character of the picture. The haughty beauty of Queen Henrietta, whose violence of character and French predilections contributed so greatly to the misfortunes of her dotting husband, is well represented in our engraving from the original picture. The straight nose, the large and expressive eyes, the full lips, and the finely chiselled chin, are indicative of the overbearing character of this French princess, whose alliance with the plastic English monarch was a curse both to himself and his country. In the distance we have a view of Hampton Court Palace, a favourite residence of Charles I. and of his profligate son, but now converted into an asylum for indigent scions of the nobility, and for the widows and children of distinguished naval and military officers.

In the Vandyck Gallery at Windsor Castle there are several portraits of Queen Henrietta Maria; but the most celebrated painting which Vandyck ever produced, and of which he made himself four different copies, was that of "King Charles I. on Horseback." The two best specimens are at Windsor and Blenheim Castle, near Woodstock, the seat of the Duke of Marlborough.

"THE MYSTIC MARRIAGE."

"The Mystic Marriage" is a picture in which the handling, the drawing, and the grouping, atone to the admirer for the abstruse, incomprehensible, and trance-like idealism of the subject.

Rome's "*La Pia*" and Flanders' "*La Devote*," as she has been well named, never produced a conception in which the union of both could be more clearly traced than in the idea that the faith of the pious canon, Herman Joseph, entitled him to be united in mystic marriage with the Virgin Mary. The conception is purely Roman—the execution in the richest Flemish style.

Vandyck's great master, Rubens, might himself have sketched the benign and graceful form of the mystic bride, who would have in her richly rounded and glowing beauty all the voluptuousness of Rubens' "*Venus*," but for a certain dignity and chaste reserve both of attitude and expression, and which forms the "sentiment" of this singular picture. The "Chanoine" gazes upon the mystic bride with a countenance literally radiant with heavenly love, sublime faith, and spiritual ecstasy, and as he is a handsome, full fed, muscular monk of the Flemish school, it required all the delicate genius of Vandyck not to portray—instead of the adoration of the saint—the love of the man.

Vandyck, always famous for his hands, has seldom surpassed those of the Virgin and this "*bienheureux Herman Joseph*," of the "Order of the Prémontrés;" and the timidity with which he extends his hand, and the dignity with which the Virgin touches it with the tips of her taper fingers, explain the nature of the mystic nuptials, in which the aspiring ardour of the highest degree of faith has brought down the condescending love of "the lily of Eden's sacred shade."

The centre figure, an angel, with rich, waving hair and heavenly smile, proffers for the Virgin's acceptance the trembling hand of the adorer; and a looker-on, whose countenance expresses awe, reverence, and love, complete the group.

The crown, the tresses, and the drapery of the Virgin, are in Vandyck's best style. There is a noble matronly composure about the whole figure, which is admirably contrasted with the light drapery of the angel—his silken locks and outspread wings—and the somewhat formal, heavy robes of the bridegroom. The accessories are in good keeping—a simple, massive pillar, a stream of heavenly light, and a graceful lily, the Virgin Mary's emblem.

"ADMIRAL NICHOLAS VAN DER BORCHT."

"Admiral Nicholas Van der Borcht" is a masterly, full-length portrait, in which all the peculiarities of Vandyck are apparent. There is a certain mannerism about this great genius; but where is

the genius without it? It is not merely a mannerism of attitude and handling, but of expression. Just as all Lawrence's beauties had a smiling archness, which his critics designate "meretricious," all Vandyck's faces have a mournful dignity. They may smile, but there is no mirth in the smile.

"It was a smile  
Gleaming like moonlight o'er some lonely isle,  
Lighting its ruins, and which seemed to say,  
That 'neath that smile the heart's cold ruins lay."



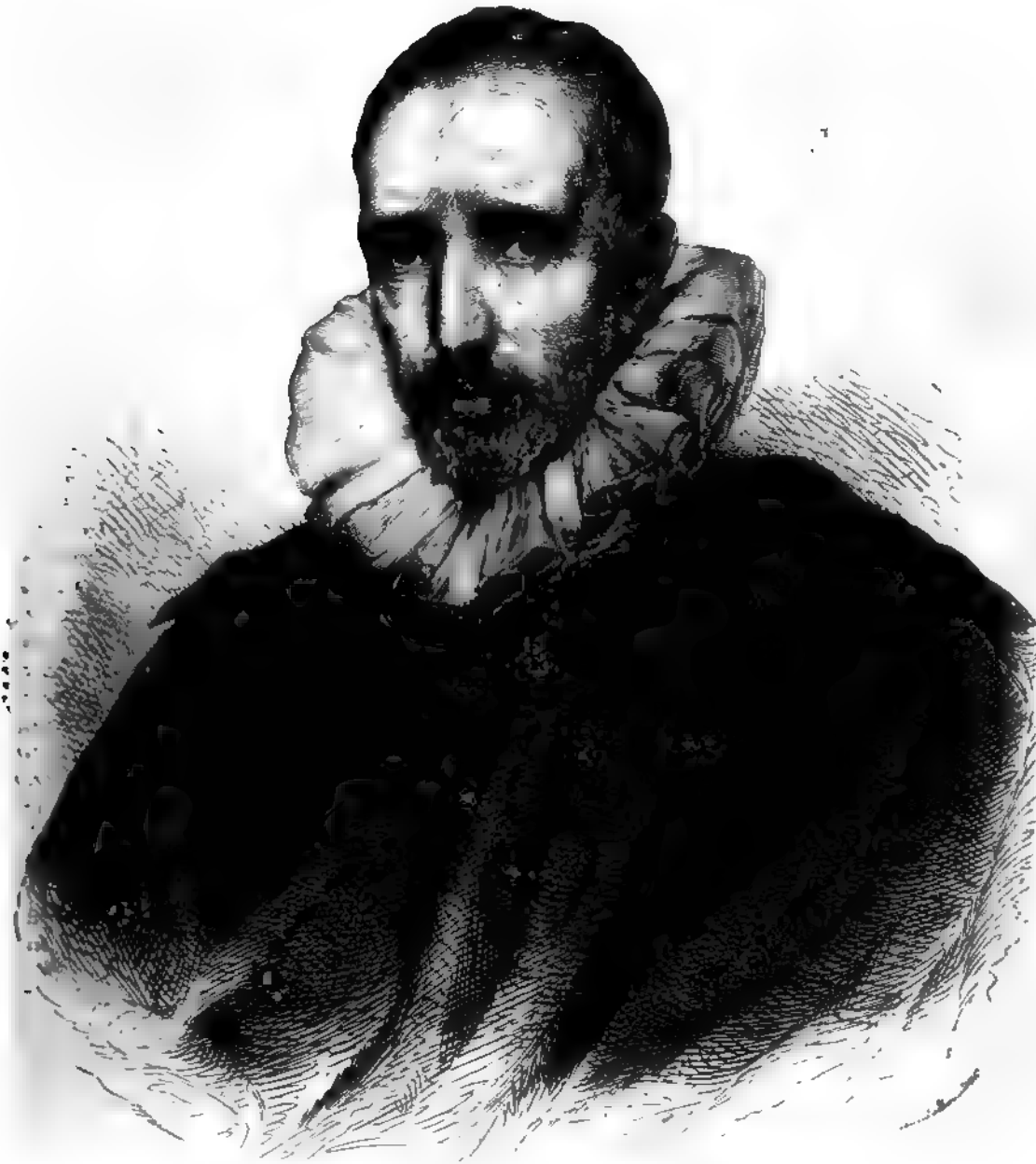
CHILDREN OF CHARLES I. FROM A PAINTING BY VANDYCK.

(Contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by Her Majesty the Queen.)

We remark this same mournful dignity in the delicate features of the First Charles, and in the harsher but still handsome lineaments of Admiral Van der Borch. It is a fine and graceful portrait—graceful in spite of the full Dutch nether garments, to which even Vandyck's pencil could impart no grace. The rest of the costume is picturesque and effective. The hair must have had a cropped appearance in those days of periwigs, but is simply and tastefully arranged according to modern notions. The falling collar and the ruffles come out well on the dark "*juste-au-corps*," and the manly, graceful hand points (appropriately enough) to

"The sea, the sea, the open sea,  
The blue, the fresh, the ever free"—

and to the fleet "Our Admiral" commanded.



JOHN GASPAR GEVARTIUS, LL.D. FROM A PAINTING BY VANDYCK

## "CHARLES I."

To the multitudes who have formed their idea of Charles I. from that celebrated portrait on horseback, in which the saint, the martyr, and the monarch are so sublimely blent, this picture by the same artist of the same King (dismounted, and in a very simple and not very becoming dress) will afford little pleasure. In fact, it will, in some degree, destroy those illusions which all love to cherish. Charles appears in this picture shorn not merely of the flowing drapery that always adds dignity to the human form, but of his natural importance of height and size. He seems smaller and shorter than in

his other portraits, and his features have not that high and lofty delicacy, nor his face that mournful length, and deep prophetic sadness, which we are accustomed to associate with the name of Charles I.

He looks like a rather handsome well-to-do country gentleman, with a dash of the Puritan, in spite of the flowing locks, slouch hat, and plume of the cavalier. But what is wanting in spirit, majesty, and expression in the form and face of the King, is in some degree compensated for by the proud beauty and bearing of the noble charger, the glossy arch of whose neck and the fire of whose eye, with the impatience legible in his thoroughbred hoof pawing the ground, seem like a reproduction of that triumph of Vandyck's youth in which he represented himself as St. Martin, on the horse which Rubens, his great master, had given him. The form of the attendant squire is graceful and spirited, and the hand which partly restrains and partly caresses the flowing mane of the gallant steed is in Vandyck's best style. The scene is a rich and leafy nook of English woodland; and the distance and the middle distance are aerial and picturesque.

The portrait of Charles I. on foot was valued in the first instance at 80,000 francs, then at 100,000, although Charles had only paid Vandyck £100 for it.

#### "THE CHILDREN OF CHARLES I."

Vandyck has immortalised the children of his royal patron. Even if the name of king should become as odious in England as it was once at Rome, and princes and princesses the objects of mockery and derision, the portraits of this great master would survive the wreck of royalty and carry down to the remotest posterity the names of these three children of the martyred king. So enduring are the triumphs of art, so transitory the possession of the pomps and vanities of the world. The first person in the group is the Princess Mary, or rather the Princess Royal of England, for she was the eldest of the children of Charles I. and Queen Henrietta Maria, his consort. The Princess Mary was born November 4th, 1631, and was baptised in St. James's Chapel by Dr. Laud. She was very early betrothed to the Prince of Orange, an alliance which proved most advantageous to the house of Stuart; for the young Mary, when left by Queen Henrietta under the care of her mother-in-law, the Princess of Orange, became greatly endeared to the people of Holland. She was not, however, exempt from the malign influences which affected more or less every member of her ill-starred family. The winter of the year in which her brother was restored to the throne of his fathers, she was attacked with the small-pox. The fatal practice of bleeding repeatedly while the eruption was appearing, deprived the unfortunate patient of every chance of rallying. Under the violence of the disease and the murderous treatment of her doctors, the Princess Mary succumbed only a few days after her brother the Duke of Gloucester had died of the same disease. She was only twenty-nine years of age at the time of her death. Her niece, Queen Mary II., died in her prime of the same scourge, after having been subjected to the same fatal treatment.

The second person in the group is the Princess Henrietta, afterwards married to the Duke of Orleans. The descendant of this marriage, in the person of Ferdinand of Modena, claims to be the nearest representative of the Stuarts, and, but for the Act of Succession which excluded for ever from the throne all persons professing the Roman Catholic religion, the lineal inheritor of the British crown. She was born at Exeter, June 16, 1644, and died a few months after her doting mother, Queen Henrietta Maria, on June 15, 1670, at the age of twenty-six. There are too many reasons for believing that the unfortunate princess fell a victim to poison, though her cousin, Mademoiselle de Montpensier, declares that she died of cholera morbus. The Prince of Wales, afterwards Charles II., is the other person in the tableau; who, with great natural advantages, a clear head, a ready wit, fascinating manners, and a good presence, although he was by no means handsome, was the most profligate sovereign that ever swayed the sceptre of the British empire. Though it is more than a hundred and eighty-five years since his death, society has scarcely recovered from the demoralising influence of his reign. Charles II. was born on the 29th of May, 1630, at the palace of St. James. He is described as a strong fine baby, but by no means remarkable for his infantine beauty. The King rode in great state that very morning to return thanks for the birth of his heir and the safety of the Queen, at St. Paul's Cathedral. During the royal procession, a bright star appeared at noon-day, to the great astonishment and admiration of the populace. A circumstance so propitious was, of course,

in a superstitious age, the subject of many comments, and a Latin epigram, with the following translation, was presented to the King, as a congratulation on the birth of the prince :—

“ When to Paul’s Cross the grateful King drew near,  
A shining star did in the heavens appear.  
Thou that consultest with bright mysteries,  
Tell me what this bright wanderer signifies.  
Now there is born a valiant prince in the West,  
That shall eclipse the kingdom of the East.”

Prince Charles was baptised on Sunday the 2nd of July in the same year, in the chapel of St. James’s, and the ceremony of the royal baptism was for the first time performed in this country for an heir to the throne after the form prescribed in our Book of Common Prayer. Laud, Bishop of London, Dean of the Royal Chapel, officiated, assisted by the Bishop of Norwich, Royal Almoner. The sponsors, strange to relate, were that zealous Roman Catholic monarch, Louis XIII., his bigoted mother, Marie de Medicis, and that Protestant champion, the unfortunate Palgrave, who joined in answering that the heir of Great Britain should be brought up in the tenets of the Church which neither of them professed. The Duke of Lennox, the old ostentatious Duchess of Richmond, and the Marquis of Hamilton were the proxies for these incongruous sponsors. At the restoration in 1660, the poets who commemorated the event alluded, in their congratulatory addresses, to the star which had shone at his birth in the following lines :—

“ The star at his birth shone out so bright,  
It dimmed the duller sun’s meridian light.”

Charles I. had three other children, a son, born on the 13th of May, 1628, who only survived his birth a few hours ; the Princess Elizabeth, who died young ; and the Duke of Gloucester, who fell a victim either to small pox or the ignorance of his doctors.

#### “JOHN GASPAR GEVARTIUS, LL.D.”

Dr. Gevartius was born at Antwerp, in 1593. He was educated in the first instance at the Jesuits’ College in his native city, and afterwards at Louvain and Douay. He left the latter place for Paris when about twenty years of age, and after profiting by a residence of some years in the French capital, during which he became acquainted with most of the most eminent scholars of the age, he returned to Douay, where he obtained the degree of LL.D., in 1621. He was distinguished in various departments of literature, and as a poet, philosopher, and controversialist he shed lustre upon his country and his name. The portrait has great artistic merit. The expression is life-like, and the colouring, which has stood the test of more than two centuries, has only been mellowed and improved by the lapse of time.

#### “FRANCOIS SNEYDERS.”

The portrait of François Sneyders, the celebrated Flemish painter of hunting scenes, animals, and still life, has all the characteristics for which Vandyck’s style was so remarkable. The face is highly pleasing and intellectual, and yet there is that sad and chastened expression with which Sir Anthony always managed to invest even his most lively portraits. The forehead is high, expansive, and intellectual, the eyes large and well formed, the nose Grecian, and the mouth and chin highly expressive. We shall have occasion very shortly to notice at length the subject of this portrait, and shall therefore postpone our remarks upon the man until we analyse the merits of the painter.

#### “FRANCOIS LANGLOIS,” PUBLISHER, OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

François Langlois lived in an age when a strict censorship was exercised over the press ; any breach of the law, as it then stood, was punished not only with imprisonment but, in some cases, even with death. The severity of the punishment did not, however, prevent the publication of innumerable pamphlets, pasquinades, and immoral works. Guy Patin, in his letters, has mentioned the names of several publishers and printers who were imprisoned for publishing unlicensed attacks upon



VAN-DYCK. P. N. L.

V. SNEYDERS. FROM A PAINTING BY VANDYCK.

(Contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by the Earl of Carlisle.)

Cardinal Mazarin. A bookseller of the Palais Royal, named Vivenet, was sentenced to the galleys for six years for this offence; and in the same year a whole family of printers and publishers were punished with even greater severity for the same offence. The eldest son was hanged, and the mother, who was forced to be present at his execution, was afterwards publicly flogged, while her younger son was condemned to the galleys. So frequently, indeed, in those days of tyranny and oppression, was a violation of the infamous laws of the press visited with capital punishment, that even as late as the year



1694, a printer and a publisher were both hanged, a woman sent to the Bastille, and two other persons incarcerated, for publishing some strictures upon the marriage of Louis XIV. with Madame de Maintenon. The dangers they incurred induced many authors who would not allow themselves to be gagged to publish French books in Holland and Switzerland, whence they were secretly introduced into France. Even Pascal had much difficulty in publishing his "Provincial Letters;" and we find that for this offence François Langlois, whose portrait by Vandyck we have reproduced in our engraving, was sent to the Bastille. Lacaille, in his "History of Printing," tells us that when a

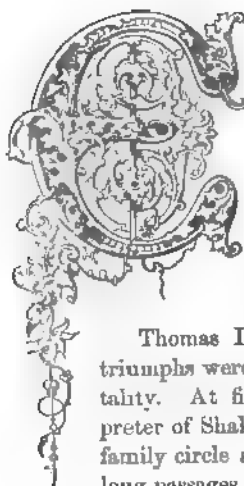


F. LANGLOIS. FROM A PAINTING BY VANDYCK.

French publisher, of the name of Anthony Berthier, had printed, in 1560, a history of Cardinal Richelieu, by Auberi, he was afraid to publish it without an especial license. He accordingly procured an interview with the Queen Dowager of France, and explained to her that he could not venture to publish Auberi's work unless her Majesty would vouchsafe him her especial license and protection, because many people, now powerful at court, but whose former conduct had been highly reprehensible, would, on account of the impartial manner in which they were treated in these memoirs, bring the publisher into trouble. "Go," said the Queen, "publish without fear, and make vice so odious that virtue alone will be found in France."

In our free and enlightened country, with the full enjoyment of that inestimable safeguard and boon—the liberty of the press, we can scarcely, in the present age, form a notion of the dangers which were inseparable from the trade of publisher and bookseller. François, the subject of our engraving, commenced the business of publisher and bookseller in the year 1634. He published many works on architecture and the arts. In his time, every publisher had a peculiar mark which he affixed to all his works, and the distinctive mark of the works of François Langlois was the columns of Hercules, with this inscription, "*Non plus ultra.*" He was a great traveller, and brought back with him many curious books and engravings, of which he disposed at a considerable profit. He came to England, and before he quitted London our Charles I. made him some very handsome presents. He was a wonderful performer on the bagpipe, and in the two portraits which have been preserved of him he is represented with this instrument in his hand. The best of these portraits was painted by Vandyck, and has been several times engraved. The other, which was the work of Vignon, and was engraved by Marriette, has not the name of Langlois affixed to it. But it is impossible to mistake the features of the man, although his dress is more fashionable than in Vandyck's painting, and his hat is adorned with feathers. In our picture the artist has taken his sitter in a moment of repose. Langlois has either ceased playing, or is about to commence.

## SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE, P.R.A.



ENGLAND is the nursery of portrait painters. There is in our national character a propensity to individualise which makes portrait-painting in England a lucrative employment. The universality of this feeling among us is sufficiently proved by the extraordinary number of photographers and daguerrotypists who manage to gain a livelihood by pandering to the national weakness.

Sir Thomas Lawrence, the object of our memoir, was an artist who thoroughly appreciated this characteristic. He knew how to preserve the identity of his likeness, and yet improve upon the original, and how to make his men all handsome and his women all lovely without sacrificing truth or probability.

Thomas Lawrence was born at Bristol on the 9th. of May, 1769. His first public triumphs were in a very different line from that in which he subsequently achieved immortality. At five years of age, in the town of Devizes, he was already popular as an interpreter of Shakespeare and Milton. Mounted on a table, he recited, to the admiration of his family circle and of the frequenters of the small country inn at which they were assembled, long passages from Shakespeare and Milton, in a voice which was naturally sweet and musical, and to which the *naïveté* of childhood gave additional charms. His ear was early accustomed to the intoxicating sound of praise, and as he had already displayed considerable talent in sketching the faces of his admirers, he was considered by all his acquaintance as a prodigy. The instances are rare of early phenomenons turning out great men, but Lawrence was an exception to the general rule. He acquired the first principles of his art at the gallery of Corsham House, and a painting of Rubens was his chief preceptor in the mystery of colouring.

At nine years of age he took a secret oath that he would become a painter, and it is recorded of him that he actually shed tears of jealous rage as he contemplated the beauty of his copy. When only ten he had already set up an *atelier* at Oxford, and was actually taking likenesses at a guinea and sometimes even two guineas a head. So famous was the boy-painter in our old University that bishops, peers, and peeresses, indeed all the principal functionaries of the town, were his *clientèle*. In eight or ten minutes his skilful hand could sketch the outline of a likeness that was deficient neither

in freedom, grace, nor style, according to the rank or pretensions of the sitter. In after life he often recurred to these early triumphs of his art. To the last he always sketched in chalk the first outline, covering his canvas with two pictures, of which the one was eventually to disappear beneath the other, and it happened not unfrequently that the first crayon design was so striking and perfect a likeness as to occasion a regret that it had ever been effaced by the finished production of the painter.

We are informed that Lawrence was at this time seized by a kind of stage fever, which threatened to wreck all his future prospects. Luckily, the father, who knew better the bent of the boy's genius, managed, by an artifice, to avert the danger. Having a secret understanding with Bernard, the actor, he chose for the *début* of his son the play of "Venice Preserved." Lawrence was to play Jaffier to Bernard's Pierre. All went on well at first, but in a trying scene requiring fire, genius, and inspiration—in a scene indeed just calculated to make or mar a young actor's reputation—Lawrence lost his presence of mind, forgot the cue, stammered out a few lines, and came to a full stop. "A dead failure," cried Bernard; and the whole audience, prompted by the father, re-echoed in chorus "A dead failure!" "How unlucky!" said Lawrence; "the stage would more easily have procured a competence for my family than painting."

London, the vast emporium of talent—London, the great national focus—was the goal of the young artist's aspirations. Nevertheless, great as had been the success of his early efforts, and certain as had hitherto been the proceeds of his brush, he was at first bewildered in the capital. His manners were courteous and popular, his appearance highly prepossessing, and his fame as a portrait painter already well established. His first attempt in London was a great success. The portrait he was commissioned to take was that of Miss Farren, a famous actress, and perhaps the most beautiful woman of her time. The lady was remarkable for the symmetry and whiteness of her arms, and Lawrence, contrary to the fashion of the time, has represented her with her arms uncovered. The picture was the rage of the season. The ladies, all seeking to rival Miss Farren in beauty, were anxious to be painted in the same style.

In England fashion is everything. When Vanloo came to London he made a happy hit, and in a very few weeks the whole town was in a fever of excitement about him. His door was besieged with the equipages of the nobility and the gentry. More than a hundred likenesses were on his easel. Appointments could only be procured with much difficulty, and at long intervals, and never without the payment of a large gratuity to the butler, who made a fortune by his appointment book.

In the same way, through a lucky chance, Lawrence became the rage; and although he had many rivals, who surpassed him in originality, in purity of style, and in knowledge of art, there were none who could compete with him in the opinion of the leaders of fashion. The colouring was so bright, the tone so fine and flattering, and the finish so exquisite of his female portraits, that all the ladies of taste were his constituents, and his success was in consequence secured. Female influence is irresistible. Married or single, ladies rule the world, through their husbands, or their lovers, and in matters of taste or *ton* there is no appeal from their decision.

John Hoppner, a contemporary artist, was a proof of this. His style was more chaste, simple, pure, and sublime; his genius was more original, and his taste more classical; but he was deficient in the dash, finish, and flattery which had made the fortune of his rival. But what is strange and almost unaccountable in the matter is, not that the ladies should patronise the painter who embellished their portraits, but that George III., who loved truth and hated flattery, should have favoured Lawrence, while the Prince of Wales, whose qualities were all showy and superficial, supported the claims of Hoppner. Perhaps his political opinions (for Hoppner was a Whig) may have gained him the favour of the Prince, who was at the time the great opponent of the old Tory King, for when the tables were turned, and the Prince came into power, Hoppner was neglected, and Lawrence was the royal favourite.

In 1791 Lawrence was made an honorary member of the Royal Academy—a distinction which he owed entirely to the favour of George III. He was at the time only just of age; and as by the statutes of the Royal Academy none are eligible who have not completed their twenty-fourth year, the title of Honorary Member was created in his favour. Not long after, the post of sergeant painter to the King became vacant through the death of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Lawrence was chosen in opposition to

Hoppner, whose age, experience, and merits entitled him to the preference. This was the great turning point in the life of our artist, and from the date of his appointment his fame and his fortune increased with equal rapidity.



SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE, P.R.A. FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF.

*(Contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by the Earl of Chesterfield.)*

In 1795 he was regularly elected a member of the Royal Academy. His portrait of Mrs. Siddons was the gem of the Exhibition of 1797, and formed the great focus of attraction. Some fifty years ago every painter of eminence had a gallery of unfinished paintings, in which amateur critics and virtuosi, with whom time was a luxury, wasted their mornings. The cicerone of Sir Thomas Lawrence's gallery had a lucrative berth. He knew how to enhance the value of every painting by pandering to the tuft-hunting spirit of the Londoners. The original of every portrait had, according to his account, a handle

to his name, and the ears of the spectators were tickled with the sound of *Duchess, Countess, or Lady*, varied so as to avoid a monotonous sameness.

The fame of the artist increased with the popularity of his gallery, and thus the painter and his puffer played into each other's hands. To enumerate the number of distinguished sitters who thronged Lawrence's *atelier*, would occupy too much space. All who were remarkable for rank, beauty, wealth, genius, talent, taste, or fashion, were among the number of his clients. In the list of celebrated statesmen who owe some portion of their immortality with the impressionable vulgar to his embellishing pencil, we find the names of Canning, Castlereagh, Grey, Aberdeen, Pitt, &c. &c. The eloquence of Curran and the genius of Sir Walter Scott beam from the eyes of those speaking likenesses which the great painter has bequeathed to us, of the originals.



COUNTESS GOWER AND CHILD. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE.

#### HIS PORTRAIT.

Our engraving is copied from a painting of himself by himself. He has seized, as usual, a favourable moment. The expression of the face is highly pleasing. His high and intellectual forehead, his noble air, his large, soft, and expressive eyes, his chiselled lips and chin, are rendered doubly attractive by the poetical grace, feeling, and inspiration with which he has invested them. In youth his hair was glossy and abundant, and he allowed it to fall in wavy tresses on his shoulders. The tone of his voice was sweet, musical, and persuasive, his disposition was mild, gentle, and even too plastic, his temper calm and difficult to disturb, his manners courteous and winning, and his conversation lively, humorous, and entertaining. His enemies, however, accuse him of being tuft-hunting and time-serving; the sensibility of which he made so great display, was, if we may believe their account, only on the surface, and he is charged with fickleness and inconsistency in his friendships. His character,

presence, and manners were indeed, like his style in painting, all for effect, with nothing real, sterling, and genuine about them. Brilliancy without solidity, and charm without depth. But we must recollect that this is the colouring his enemies give to the picture; and success such as his must have made many hostile to him, and many envious of his good fortune. They cannot deny, however, that he was very good-looking, and that the fascination of his manner, the charms of his conversation, and, above all, the high reputation he enjoyed among men (for that is a talisman all powerful with *le beau sexe*), made him for a time the idol of the fair. His likeness to George Canning, the Prime Minister, was so great that, when he lost his redundant locks and time and sorrow had left their traces on his features, he was often mistaken for the great statesman. This extraordinary resemblance between these two celebrities caused some very curious mistakes when he was visiting Paris in the year 1825. At that time he was already bald about the temples, and his eyes, always large and full of meaning, appeared more than usually so from the ravages that the melancholia, from which he had long been suffering, had made in his face.

#### "COUNTESS GOWER AND CHILD."

The beautiful portrait from which our engraving is copied was painted when Sir Thomas Lawrence was at the height of his reputation, and at a time when his genius and youthful enthusiasm had been tempered and matured by age and experience. The portrait of Lady Gower and child was one of the great attractions of the Exhibition of the Royal Academy for the year 1828. In his representations of female loveliness, no painter of any age or country has ever surpassed Sir Thomas; and the Exhibition of this year (the last but one to which he contributed any of the productions of his genius) was rich in his delineations of female loveliness. His portrait of Lady Lyndhurst was considered a *chef-d'œuvre*, and his likeness of the daughter of the Right Hon. Wm. Peel excited the admiration of all beholders. A critic remarks: "His portrait of the infant daughter of Mr. Peel almost rivals his justly famous picture of Lord Durham's child." Of Mrs. Peel's likeness, exhibited the year previous, a contemporary critic remarked: "We conceive this to be among the loveliest, and if so the highest, achievements of modern art." And perhaps the term "modern" may be received as anything but an invidious distinction in this particular instance, for we doubt if the old masters themselves have furnished us with more fascinating transcripts of female beauty than have fallen from the pencils of Reynolds, Lawrence, &c. &c. We mean, of course, in the way of portraits; for in the ideal we have not approached them. The male portraits of Titian, and some of his followers of the Venetian and Roman schools, and also those of Rembrandt and Rubens, possess a vigour, a vitality, and an individuality which have never since been approached; but their female portraits are much less distinguished from those of our own day, and of that which preceded it; not, however, by a deficiency of skill on the part of the old masters in this department, but by an access of it in their modern rivals, for we will not call Reynolds or Lawrence imitators of any school whatever.

#### "THE CHILDREN OF C. B. CALMADY, ESQ."

The portraits of these two lovely children, No. 99, in the catalogue of the exhibition of 1824, were the gems of the collection of that year, and have ever since excited the admiration of the world. Unanimous, however, as is the judgment of the critics upon the merits of the piece, we cannot help thinking that the children have an exuberance or rather massiveness about them which rather detracts from the grace and poetry of the conception. The excessive paleness of the one is in strong and unpleasant contrast to the redundant colouring of the other; and the features of the child who looks us full in the face, though glowing with health, life, and animation, are somewhat too coarse and rude for her gentle and refined parentage.

The mother, who was the best judge of the accuracy of the likeness, and moreover a woman of taste and talent, thus speaks of the portraits:—"The beautiful difference he has preserved in the two children's colouring is lovely. They have both fair skins, but yet so totally unlike—Laura's glowing and rosy fairness, if one can call it so, and Emmy's entirely different and pearl-like tints, which he has shown in the most obvious and wonderful manner—so completely characterising the two children." It

is, however, curious that the French, who are exceedingly fond of reproducing this *chef-d'œuvre* of our great portrait painter, invariably tone down the rustic exuberance of the children, and make them in their copies more delicate and refined. They sacrifice the faithfulness of the imitation by diminishing the dark blue of the shade in the neck of the youngest child, and by softening the purple reflection on the infant's legs. But although we cannot entirely approve of the colouring, the beauties of the piece are indisputable. There is in the expression of the child in profile an exquisite sensibility, and the joy of the rosy infant who holds up its cherub-like hand in the childish ecstasy of some momentary impulse, whilst its leg presses on the lap of its sister in the *abandon* of carelessness, is simple and natural. The foreshortening of the limb in all its infantile redundancy, and the baby softness of the fat little hand in the air, are evidence of the care and study which the painter has brought to bear upon the picture.

The history of this masterpiece is highly interesting, as it shows the character of Sir T. Lawrence in a very favourable light. An engraver of the name of Lewis had often suggested to Mrs. Calmady that her two children, Emily and Laura, would make excellent subjects for a painting, and that Sir T. Lawrence would be eager, if he only saw the children, to paint them upon her own terms. Some little time, however, intervened before an opportunity occurred of presenting them to Sir Thomas Lawrence, whose prices at that time, advertised on his mantelpiece, were from six hundred guineas a full length, down to one hundred and fifty, which was the cost of the smallest head.

In July, 1823, Mrs. Calmady obtained an interview with Sir Thomas, who was much struck with the surpassing beauty of her children, and offered to paint them both for two hundred guineas—a sum very much below his usual charge. Mrs. Calmady, who is our authority, says: “I must, I suppose, have looked despairingly, for he immediately added, without my saying a word, ‘Well, we must say one hundred and fifty pounds for merely the two little heads in a circle and some sky, and finish it at once.’” Early the next morning the artist commenced his sketch, and Mrs. Calmady expressed such unbounded delight at the chalk drawing of the children's heads, that the artist kindly said, “That he would devote that day to doing a little more to it, and would beg her acceptance of it, as he would begin another.”

In the sketch both the faces were full, and the child whom we now see in profile looked more lovely than in her side face. There was, moreover, a greater softness and delicacy in the sketch than in the finished painting. Sir Thomas was more proud of this picture than of any other he ever painted, and often repeated, during its progress, that it would be the best piece of the kind he had ever painted. He was remarkably fond of children, and managed most successfully to relieve the tedium, which his infantile sitters experienced, by relating stories to them, that he improvised, and by occasionally rollicking and romping with them. The children were thus kept in good humour, and returned the compliment by relating anecdotes from their nursery *répertoire* about “Dame Wiggins,” “Field Mice,” and “Raspberry Cream.”

The effects he produced were excellent, but still they did not quite satisfy him. After in vain attempting to catch the playful attitude and expression of Emily Calmady, whose shoe he had stolen, he exclaimed, “How disheartening it is, when we have nature before us, to see how far—with our best efforts and all our study—how very far short we fall of her.”

When, after many interruptions, the portraits were finished, Sir Thomas declared, “This is my best picture—I have no hesitation in saying so—my best picture of the kind; one of the few I should wish hereafter to be known by.”

#### “PORTRAIT OF GEORGE IV.”

Lawrence painted numerous full-length portraits of George IV. in his Garter Robes, from one of which our engraving is copied. He was paid for them at the rate of three hundred guineas each—less than one half of Sir Thomas's regular price. In writing to his sister Anne on this subject, he says, “His Majesty has seemed to make it a great point that pictures—his own portrait and others—should be instantly finished. I was with him on Monday at Buckingham House, from between three and four to half-past six. He then commanded me to attend him at Buckingham House on Tuesday, at four, which I did, staying with him till half-past six. He then confirmed his former appointment to sit to me at three on Wednesday, but which, by the advice of the physicians, he subsequently

declined." Immediately after his coronation the King sent for Sir Thomas Lawrence, and directed him to paint a full-length portrait of him in his coronation robes, seated in St. Edward's chair, with his regalia, as he appeared at the altar in Westminster Abbey.



CHILDREN OF C. B. CALMADY, ESQ. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE.

"MASTER LAMBTON."

The beautiful painting of which this engraving is a faithful copy, was contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by the Earl of Durham. None have excelled and few have ever equalled Lawrence in the colouring of the human complexion. In designing such subjects as "Master Lambton," the medium through which he saw was not simply *couleur de rose*, but *couleur de rose et de lis*. Whenever the opportunity offered, he seized, with the instinct of genius, the most pleasing expression of the face, and, as we see exemplified in the portrait of Master Lambton, he made the likeness depend more upon that expression than even upon the form of the face or the features. He repudiated the corrupt fashion which had obtained among contemporary painters of abandoning the draperies and the backgrounds of portraits to inferior artists, and of devoting their undivided attention to the head and figure. Sir





GEORGE IV. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE.

Thomas Lawrence's accessories are some of the most striking parts of his pictures. The velvet jacket and trowsers, in the original of our engraving, have a smoothness, a glossiness, and a silken glory which surpass in richness the beauty of even the Genoese texture. Though some of his portraits of ladies are considered his *chefs-d'œuvre*, such, for instance, as "Miss Farren," afterwards Countess of Derby, and "Mrs. Siddons," there is no portrait more characteristic of his style than "Master Lambton."

The boy was originally clothed in yellow; but it was objected by the critics that the browns of the gravel and rocks forming the back-ground of the picture would thus produce a disagreeable monotony. Lawrence, therefore, changed the yellow to red—a colour but little suited to the contemplative nature of the subject. But whatever are the flaws which criticism may discover in the colouring, the conception is good, and the effect of the whole very pleasing. The Honourable Charles William Lambton, commonly called Master Lambton, was the eldest son of Lord Durham by his second wife, Louisa Elizabeth, the daughter of the second Earl Grey, and was born in January, 1818. He was seven years of age when his likeness was taken by Lawrence.

We quote from a periodical of the time the following criticism of this celebrated painting:—"This is the most exquisite representation of interesting childhood that we ever beheld. The simple action, and sweet expression of infantile nature which we see in this portrait were never excelled by Sir Joshua Reynolds in his happiest moments. The boy is seated amid some rocky scenery, enjoying, apparently, a waking dream of childhood, and, for the moment, unconscious of external objects. His attitude is simple and natural—just as a child might throw himself down on a green bank after being fatigued with sport, when the flow of his animal spirits subsides, without being exhausted. His dress being of crimson velvet, is, of course, very rich; yet it never attracts the attention for an instant from that soft look of innocence, and those engaging eyes, which reflect the loveliest light of a pure and happy mind. It is, indeed, one of those works which make the painter to be forgotten in the reality of the creation which he has produced. It speaks directly to the feelings, in the very voice of nature, and at once fascinates the heart. The colouring is warm and chaste, the execution marked with equal feeling and accuracy."

The commission to paint the likenesses of the Allied Sovereigns who visited England in 1814 had been intrusted to Sir Thomas Lawrence, but the stay of their majesties was so short, and their time so fully occupied with State affairs, that the artist had no opportunity of performing the difficult but honourable task assigned to him.

At the congress assembled at Aix-la-Chapelle, in the year 1818, to settle the boundaries of the European kingdoms, he was more fortunate. The selection of Sir Thomas Lawrence from among all the painters of the world for this arduous and delicate duty was creditable alike to the artist and the nation to which he belonged. In a letter written in the summer of 1818 to his old friend Mr. J. J. Angerstein at Vienna, he thus speaks of his mission to Aix-la-Chapelle. "The terms on which I undertook this mission were, to be paid my usual prices for the portraits, and one thousand pounds for travelling expenses and loss of time. My journey to Rome will be on the same. These appear to be liberal terms, and I am sure are meant as such by the Prince. The first was of my own proposing, when the question was asked me; but I must still look to the honour I have received, and the good fortune of having been thus distinguished in my profession, as the chief good resulting from it, for many unavoidable circumstances make it of less pecuniary advantage."

He encountered several *contretemps* in the execution of his mission. The most formidable was the non-arrival, through mismanagement in the conveyance, of the two portable rooms which the Government had had constructed for him, and which contained his canvas and all his painting *matériel*. These two rooms were to have been erected in the gardens of the hotel occupied by Lord Castlereagh, who was our ambassador at Aix-la-Chapelle. Alluding to the delay in the arrival of these rooms, he says, in a letter to Mr. Farington, dated the 5th of November, 1818, "The temporary rooms, for which Lord Castlereagh had destined a part of his garden, not having arrived, the magistrates of this city granted me the use of part of the large gallery of the Hotel de Ville, which was immediately fitted up as my painting-room, and it is certainly the best I ever had. The building itself is of vast size, and the length and height of the gallery and the portions of it reserved for me are all in proportion to it.

It has three large windows, one north ; and though it is of great depth, from an excellent German stove, it is of the most temperate heat throughout. The magistrates took the right tone, not considering it as a boon to an individual, in which they might not have been justified, whatever might be his supposed professional talent, but viewing it as an additional honour to their city that the allied monarchs honoured its Hotel de Ville with their frequent presence for this purpose, in conformity with the desire of the Prince Regent of England.

"A few days after the departure of the Emperor of Russia (he had left with the King of Prussia to attend a review of Russian and German troops) the Emperor of Austria condescended to fix a day for his coming, and, punctually at the hour, I had the honour of receiving him in my new painting-room, and the result has been that from the first sitting to the last completion of the likeness (for it is finished) I entirely succeeded, I may truly and accurately say, to the delight of his officers and attendants and of numbers of the people of Aix-la-Chapelle, by whom he is exceedingly beloved, crowds lining the terrace and halls of the Hotel de Ville on his departure, and shouting forth the enthusiasm of the heart for their former sovereign. Yesterday was his sixth sitting, and he sits to me once more for the hand, the face being entirely completed. I had some difficulties to encounter. His countenance is rather long and thin, and, when grave, is grave to melancholy ; but when he speaks, benevolence itself lights it up with the most agreeable expression, and making it the perfect image of a good mind. He lives in all the state of imperial majesty, with splendid state equipages, &c. &c., and of right takes precedence of Russia."

He sums up the account of the success of his mission to Aix-la-Chapelle in a letter to his niece, dated November 26th, 1818. "My exertions," says he, "have been repaid by complete success ; the family attendants and subjects of each sovereign unanimously declaring that the portraits I have taken are the most faithful and satisfactory resemblances of them that have ever been painted, and the general voice of all uniting in common approbation—a word that I assure you is much below the impression I use it to describe." \* \* \* "Providence has enabled me to give the fullest exertions of my faculties to this arduous business, and a coincidence of rare circumstances has given a professional distinction to it that has never yet occurred."

"Sent here by royal command, the magistrates of an imperial city, in which for centuries the emperor has been crowned, granted me the principal gallery of the town-house for my painting-room ; and to this the three greatest monarchs in recent political importance have condescended to come to be painted by me—the Emperor Francis sitting to me seven times, the Emperor Alexander (including two for a drawing) seven times, and the King of Prussia six, the average time in each sitting being two hours ; and in the result, and even during progress, my exertions being accompanied and crowned with the most complete success."

The success of this mission was certainly the greatest event in the celebrated artist's career ; and can we wonder if the man who had been closeted so often for so many hours with the crowned heads of Europe, and whose hand the Emperor of Russia had held affectionately in his own for several minutes, became ever after a tuft-hunter ?

In 1819 he accomplished one of the great objects of his ambition. In a letter to Mr. J. J. Angerstein, dated Vienna, 3rd of January, 1819, he says, "To visit Rome has been one of those day-dreams that I have frequently indulged in ; and the circumstances under which I may now gratify that wish are perhaps the most favourable that could have been imagined, unless I had procured an ample fortune and proceeded thither at my entire leisure." He left Vienna for Rome on the 3rd of May, 1819, and so great was his impatience to reach the Eternal City that he slept every night in his carriage, except one, while he was *en route*. He reached Rome on the 10th of May, 1819, and his first impressions were unfavourable. A closer inspection, however, of the ~~glories of that Rome~~ who is or was the mistress of the world, made him change his opinion. In writing to Farington from the Hotel Grande Bretagne, Rome, May 19, 1819, "I came to Rome," he says, "by the Farlo Monte road, through magnificent scenery, and, with one day's exception, fine weather, catching my first view of St. Peter's on an exceedingly fine morning between six and seven o'clock. Mr. Thomson and Mr. Howard can well imagine the pleasure of that moment, a pleasure increasing every fifty yards till I entered the Porto del Popolo, when (what will they say to me?) I found Rome small. If, however, they are indignant at this, tell them the injustice has been amply punished, for I am at this moment

overpowered with its immensity and grandeur. I have thus brought you to Rome, and have given you the exact, the opposite, the true impressions on my mind." In a letter addressed to Lysons some six weeks later: "Of Rome I can say nothing to you, but express fruitless wishes for your being here, and feelings of increased astonishment and admiration and affection for it; that its greatness



MASTER LAMSTON. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE.

*(Contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by the Earl of Durham.)*

and beauty, the remains of its earlier grandeur, are many of them on so vast a scale, and convey such an idea of power and habitual notions of the magnificent and great, that they seem less exertions of men as they now are than the equal and ordinary productions of another scale of being; their very pavement seems that of a race of giants, whilst the exceeding beauty and the hues and tints and col-

responding harmony of the sky, give a charm to the whole effect that divests it of every gloomy and depressing feeling, and fixes the mind in a state of the purest admiration that it is possible for it to enjoy."

He painted much while at Rome, but the portraits of Pope Pius VII. and Cardinal Gonsalvi were the most remarkable of his productions. "If what I have done here in the portraits of the Pope and the Cardinal," says he, in a letter to Farington, of the date of July 2nd, 1819, "be compared only with my own works, I have had complete success; and may truly say to so near a friend that, as an artist, I have nowhere been more popular than at Rome." He set out on his return to England in the latter part of December, and travelled so leisurely that he did not arrive in London till the 30th of March, 1820.

Mr. West, the venerable President of the Royal Academy, died on the 10th of that month, and the day after Lawrence's arrival in England he was, with the exception of two votes, unanimously



THE DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND AND DAUGHTER. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR T. LAWRENCE, P.R.A.

elected to that vacant post of honour. In a letter to his brother Andrew, dated Russell-square, Good Friday, 1820, he says, "I came yesterday morning. I knew not there was to be an election of President of the Royal Academy in the evening till a few hours before it. I did not go to it, but with the exception of two votes, I was unanimously elected. It is very cheering to me to receive this unsolicited mark of the confidence of my brother artists on the first day of my return, after an absence of more than a year and a half."

This brother, to whom he was sincerely attached, died on the 31st of July, 1821, just about the time he was completing his splendid picture of George IV. arrayed in his robes as Sovereign of the Order of the Garter.

The productions of our great portrait painter formed the subjects of first-rate engravings, and we know of no artist of the English School whose masterpieces have stood the trying test better of a reproduction in copperplate impressions. The painting of "The Children of C. B. Calmady, Esq.," was engraved by Mr. Doo, and that first sketch of the same subject to which we alluded in our critical

analysis of the piece, was beautifully etched by Mr. Lewis, to whom Sir Thomas Lawrence was a most liberal patron, as he was indeed to all who were connected with him in his professional career.

Though endowed by nature with many excellent qualities, Sir Thomas was essentially a man of the world; he lived in the world and for the world, and in the unremitting pursuit of that wealth which only collateral relations would inherit, he was forgetful of the requirements of the Fourth Commandment. Sir Joshua Reynolds, whom he sought to emulate in fame and fortune, had most unwisely, and, we are certain, most untruly stated that the man who did not work on Sunday would never make a great painter. One Sunday morning, Mr. Lane, the engraver, called upon Lawrence and found him touching up a proof of one of his own engravings. After a few commonplace remarks, Sir Thomas requested Mr. Lane to make the alterations on the stone which he had suggested in the proof. Mr. Lane, however, with a firmness which does him great credit, when we recollect how dependent he was on the patronage of the painter, refused to comply, stating, by way of excuse, that he had made a promise to his dying father, that he would never desecrate the seventh day by any secular occupation. He thus read the kind but careless artist a lesson which we trust he did not easily forget. Lawrence was too just and generous to resent the pious engraver's refusal.

The great portrait painter of the age was, of course, the lion of the London season; and his handsome person, refined manners, and lively conversation secured him everywhere the favour of the fair. At dinner parties he was universally popular; and he had quite a reputation for public speaking, as his addresses were always short, pithy, and to the point. His voice was musical, and his delivery graceful and effective.

In the year 1825, Sir Thomas returned to England from a royal mission on which he had been despatched to Paris; and on the 10th of December in that year he delivered a lecture, which was printed with his own corrections. As a specimen of his style, we extract a short paragraph. "Some difference of opinion," said he, "may have existed on the present occasion. The result, however, sufficiently proves that the Academy are pleased with your exertions. In framing the laws which refer to those exertions, the council and members of the Royal Academy employed the most serious consideration and maturely weighed every probable circumstance to which they can apply. It might reasonably be expected, that the known printed regulations of a public body would be scrupulously obeyed by those who are to benefit by their operation, and the most injurious consequences would ensue if they could be infringed with impunity. As this, however, cannot be permitted, the penalty of the fault or the mistake must fall on the individual. The regret, indeed, may be deeply felt by the Academy, since few things can be more painful to it than to see a work of genius deprived of its reward, and the institution itself of the just credit which it might otherwise have gained from it."

In these remarks Sir Thomas, with that benevolence for which he was so distinguished, endeavoured to console unsuccessful competitors for the mortification of their failure.

In 1826 Sir Thomas contributed his usual number of eight pictures to the Exhibition of the Royal Academy. The most remarkable and popular was the portrait of the Honourable Mrs. Hope. She is represented as a Fatima of the East, in a turban splendidly embroidered with gold. The picture is valuable as a work of art quite independent of its merit as a portrait. The exhibitions of 1827 and 1828 were equally rich in the productions of Lawrence's genius, for he painted incessantly; and there is no doubt that the unwearying assiduity with which he followed his profession, coupled with the confinement of his *atelier*, precipitated the fatal catastrophe of 1829.

In the exhibition of 1827 the portrait of Miss Croker was the most admired of all the artist's productions. The subject was young, lovely, and intellectual; and the artist has managed to translate with consummate skill upon the canvas the play of her expressive features. The exhibition of 1828 was also rich in representations of female loveliness. The Marchioness of Londonderry, with her son Lord Seaham, and the daughter of the Right Honourable William Peel, were the popular favourites. The Peel family were great patrons of Sir Thomas, who received more commissions from Sir Robert Peel for portraits than from any other person, George IV. alone excepted. The exhibition of the Academy for 1829 received the last contributions from the pencil of Sir Thomas during his life. Nothing seemed to predict the sudden eclipse of so bright a star. His fame and his fortune had just reached their culminating point, when in midst of the memories of the past, the glories of the present, and the prospects of the future, the fatal hour arrived.

Towards the close of the year 1829, Sir Thomas Lawrence was more busily engaged than he had ever been in his life ; and although many of his acquaintances assert that they saw no difference in his appearance, his intimate friends were uneasy at the sallow and sordid colour of his complexion. He had, however, no anxiety about himself, as his letters sufficiently testify. He was more active than ever with his pencil and his pen ; and, in a letter to his sister Ann, whom he loved better than anything else upon earth, dated 17th December, 1829, he says : " I am grieved to the soul that urgent circumstances keep me at this time from the comfort of seeing you ; but in the next month I will certainly break away from all engagements to be with you." But alas ! "*L'homme propose et Dieu dispose.*" Before the end of the first week of that next month Sir Thomas was no more. The sister to whom he was so much attached had received a note from him dated 6th January, 1830, stating that he could not dine with her the next day, but must be "content to see him to a late simple dinner on Friday." He breathed his last on the Thursday preceding that Friday of ossification of the heart, as was generally supposed, although some declared that he died from the loss of blood occasioned by the "accidental" slipping of the bandage from the arm in which he had been bled. His death was a great national loss ; and his kindness of disposition had so greatly endeared him to all his relatives, friends, and dependents, that their grief for him was lasting and sincere.

#### "THE DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND AND DAUGHTER."

This is a fine, elaborate portrait of the beautiful Duchess of Sutherland and daughter, contributed to the exhibition of the Royal Academy many years ago. The artist represents his *beau-idéal* of female loveliness seated in a chair, with an air of maternal dignity and repose. Her drapery is dark, rich, and glossy ; and she has on her knee a flaxen-headed child—arch, pretty, and full of animation—pointing with its finger vivaciously to some object in the distance, to which it is directing the mother's attention. Critics have remarked that the child's legs are too thin, too much like "riding-rods," and that the arms bear too close a resemblance to "eel-skins stuffed." They certainly have not the plumpness and fulness characteristic of childhood. The children of Rubens are too fleshy, and those of Raphael too muscular ; and, in steering between the two extremes, Lawrence has fallen into the error of making his children too lank. In the delineation of infantile beauty, Gainsborough surpassed both Reynolds and Lawrence. He invested his children with all the symmetry and loveliness which characterise them in rural life, and gave to their forms richness and fulness, without redundancy. In this portrait of the Duchess of Sutherland, the daughter is introduced very gracefully. The infant is a fine specimen of an English child. Her fair complexion and flaxen hair produce a cherub-like effect, which harmonises well with the matronly purity and dignity of the mother's face and form. There is an archness in the infant's features, and a life and animation in the attitude highly pleasing. The *pose* is very artistic : the finger pointing to some object in the distance, while the leg is thrown back to secure its seat upon the mother's lap.

Sir Thomas was a great favourite of King George IV., and had been, if report speaks true, a still greater favourite of the unfortunate Queen Caroline. His conduct on the death of that wretched victim of guilt or persecution does honour to his courage and independence of spirit : for, notwithstanding the patronage of the monarch, when the Queen died, he ordered the schools and library of the Royal Academy to be closed until after her Majesty's remains were removed from Brandenburg House for interment in her native country. As it was generally understood that any display of sympathy with, or of pity for, this unhappy princess would involve the forfeiture of the King's favour, the Portrait Painter in Ordinary showed no little confidence in himself, or contempt of consequences, by so public an exhibition of grief.

For the next three or four years Sir Thomas worked diligently in his *atelier*, as the numerous paintings he contributed to successive exhibitions of the Royal Academy testify. In the spring of the year 1824, while engaged upon the likenesses of the Calmady children, he was interrupted by the arrival of a packet from the King of Denmark, which he opened and read to Mr. and Mrs. Calmady. It contained, in French, his election to the rank of honorary member of the Royal Academy of Denmark : and the King's letter was signed, "*Votre affectionné, Christian Frederick.*" After having read



JOHN KEMBLE AS "HAMLET. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE, P.R.A.





RECONCILIATION; OR, A DICKENS ADVISE FROM A PAINTING BY F. BROWN, A.R.A.

(By the kind permission of Mr. Gambart.)

the flattering compliments paid to him by the King, Sir Thomas remarked, in his usual style of courteous *badinage*, "The fact is, they have heard I am painting this picture."

As a proof of his kind and forgiving disposition, it is stated that when a man whom he had employed in several important transactions took advantage of his knowledge of his signature to forge his name to a cheque upon Messrs. Coutts for two hundred pounds, Sir Thomas refused to prosecute the man for forgery; and when, the day after the discovery of the fraud, the wife of the man had the impudence to send a pressing letter to Sir Thomas for nineteen pounds due to her husband, Lawrence paid the money. "I would never," said he, "hang a man for two hundred pounds." At that date, the law which made forgery a capital crime was still in force; and the disinclination which men of feeling and refinement experienced in being the instruments of what they considered a judicial murder, often occasioned a failure of justice in cases of forgery.

#### "JOHN KEMBLE AS HAMLET."

The portrait of John Kemble as Hamlet, from which our illustration is copied, is one of the most celebrated of our painter's productions. That it is a theatrical portrait we cannot deny, since the great tragedian is represented in a famous character; but we do not understand how this detracts from its merits as a likeness. In reference to this noble painting, Sir T. Lawrence thus writes to his friend Mrs. Boucherette, "I am very glad that after 'The Two Friends' you like my 'Hamlet,' which, except my 'Satan,' I think my best work. I must now try, though, to give a something much better, for I begin to be really uneasy at finding myself so harnessed and shackled into this dry mill-horse business, which yet I must get through with steady industry, well knowing that this is the very season of my life when it is most necessary."

We shall perhaps never again see a "Hamlet" in which the sublime and beautiful were so blended as in the original of this portrait; and the artist has preserved with admirable fidelity the likeness of the man and the inspiration of the actor. Sir Thomas Lawrence painted many portraits of John Kemble, some of which are exhibited in the Art Treasures Exhibition, viz.,—"J. Kemble as Coriolanus," contributed by the Earl of Yarborough; "J. Kemble when Twenty-five," a head, contributed by — Combe, Esq.; and "J. Kemble," half length, seated, contributed by Colonel North. There is not, however, any other likeness of John Kemble in which the grace and dignity of the original are so well represented as in the painting from which our engraving has been copied.

#### SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE'S MERITS.

Our great portrait painter had a European reputation. At Paris, at Venice, at Turin, and at Rome, he was as famous as he was in London. He was an honorary member of many of the Continental Academies of Fine Arts; and the cities most famous in history for the artists they have produced were proud to do him honour.

Antonio Canova, the great sculptor, writing to him from Rome, says: "I have had a little drawing made of the 'Sleeping Nymph;' and, in compliance with your request, I inclose it in this letter. I must however declare, that it will afford you but a poor idea of my work, of which it is certainly not an accurate representation; but I know of no one who could execute a design in the masterly and graceful style which is so peculiarly yours. . . . I say again that nothing can perish which has elicited the unanimous approbation bestowed on the stupendous productions of your pencil *wherever* they have been exhibited." G. Canova adds his testimony to the merits of Lawrence, in the following eulogium upon the portrait of George IV., painted for the Pope: "It is a wonderful production of your animated pencil; and I join my feeble praise to the universal admiration of the professors and amateurs of the pictorial art, who seem as though they could never sufficiently eulogise your extraordinary production."

On the subject of the same masterpiece Cardinal Gonsalvi writes to Lawrence, "I must tell you that his Holiness and the whole city of Rome, inhabitants as well as foreigners, agree in pronouncing that nothing was ever finer in the way of portraiture. The head exceeds all imagination. The picture

is the theme of universal admiration, and there is now in Rome a work worthy of your high reputation. It is hung in the Vatican beside the Loggie of Raphael. M. Camonicini made use of that situation as being the most appropriate. On Sundays and Thursdays it is seen and admired by everybody. His Holiness desires me to assure you of the pleasure he feels in receiving this superb work, and the lines with which you have pleased to accompany it; and I must also assure you of his esteem and affection."

If in the city which has been styled by historians and poets "the mother of arts and arms," his reputation was so great and his talent so highly appreciated, we need not wonder at that species of painter-worship with which his countrymen honoured him.

## FRANK STONE, R.A.



Extract from Bogue's "Men of the Time" the following memoir of this popular artist. Frank Stone originally practised in water-colours. As late as 1816, he continued a member of the Old Society of Painters in Water Colours, to whose exhibitions he had, for twelve years and more, contributed a clever picture or two—"Scenes from Shakespeare," and others of a kind by which his name is better known—"The Stolen Sketch," "The Evening Walk," &c. &c. He first exhibited at the Academy in 1837; in that and the two following years, portraits; in 1840, "A Legend of Montrose;" in 1841, "The Stolen Interview," between Prince

Charles and the Infanta of Spain, selected by the holder of an Art Union prize of £200. Familiar to everybody, by the engravings, are the pictures which followed; "The Last Appeal," "The Course of True Love," "Impending Fate," "Mateel," &c. &c.

Mr. Stone was elected an associate of the Academy in 1851.

### "THE SISTER'S LESSON."

Frank Stone's masterpiece is the illustration of a tale of surpassing interest. Elizabeth and Clara were sisters, the cherished wards of an uncle, whose greatest pleasure in life had been to gratify their every whim and fancy.

Elizabeth was of a disposition which no indulgence could injure; but Clara, who was by nature hot-headed, self-willed, and somewhat imperious, always acted upon the impulse of the moment, and had often to repent her rashness and impetuosity. Her sister's example and precepts had, indeed, in a great measure, corrected the infirmities of her temper, but she was still destined to receive a lesson, which the bitter experience of a self-inflicted disappointment could alone impress upon her mind.

At the death of their uncle, who had left his property between them, they became their own mistresses; and a cousin, of the name of John Bowring, who had long admired Clara in secret, now openly proposed for her, and was accepted.

Her warm and impetuous nature had a charm for John Bowring, which can only be accounted for by the entire contrast which it afforded to his own calm and reflective character.

Affairs of importance kept Bowring in Edinburgh during the early part of their engagement, and Clara was much annoyed at the shortness of his letters, and the hurried and apparently careless manner in which they were written. He excused himself on the plea of excessive business and weakness of sight.

The appointed time for their union at length approached, and the lover, whose letters had been less frequent than ever, at last wrote to beg a postponement of the day. Such a request from a suitor who



PETER PAUL RUBENS FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF.  
*(Donated to the Art Treasures Exhibition by her Majesty the Queen.)*



had professed so much ardent attachment, was enough to have fired a much less irascible temper than Clara's. Without a moment's hesitation or delay, she wrote to break off her engagement; and, while her anger lasted, she felt all the satisfaction that the revenge of a supposed insult could bestow. Time, however, which softened her resentment, did not extinguish her regret. She had long regarded Bowring in the light of a husband, had associated him with herself in all her future life, and she found she could not easily tear his image from her heart.

Her affectionate and watchful sister probed her secret sorrow; and one day, when Clara was more than usually depressed, requested her to listen to a letter she had just received from John. Clara fired up in a moment, and begged that, as all was at an end between them, his name might never be mentioned. Her sister insisted on reading the cousin's letter, which was to the effect "that, finding his sight was fast failing, he had determined on



HENRY IV. TRUSTING THE SYMBOL OF HIS POWER TO HIS QUEEN. FROM A PAINTING BY RUBENS.

going to London for advice; that while he was uncertain of the issue, he had written to Clara to delay the day of their marriage, as his fate depended upon the recovering of his sight; and that he had deferred till his return the explanation of his conduct in asking for a postponement of what had been so long to him the object of all his hopes."

Clara's gushing tears and changing colour told how deeply she was affected. At length her feelings found utterance in the exclamation: "My letter, my fatal letter! it is all over!"

"No," replied Elizabeth; "aware of the rashness of your disposition, I took the liberty of an elder sister, opened the letter you had sent to your cousin, and disproving of the contents, withheld it!"

Clara could only acknowledge the amount of her obligation and her sense of the lesson she had received by throwing her arms round her sister's neck.

In addition to the "Sister's Lesson," Mr. Gambart has published engravings from the following paintings by F. Stone: "The Old, Old Story," "Helena," "Does he Mean it?" "Preparing for Market," and "Returning from Market."

## PETER PAUL RUBENS.



SEVERAL of the most eminent painters, both in ancient and modern times, have been remarkable for great personal beauty.

From the days of Raphael to those of Lawrence, this fact has been incontestable. The better part of beauty is expression; and the occupation of a painter, like that of a poet, tends to refine, to raise, and to cultivate expression; and when this "mind-illumined face" is one in which regularity of features and brilliancy of colouring unite, the result is such as we behold in the well-known and much-admired portrait of Peter Paul Rubens.

Rubens! There is a glow and a richness in the very name! It is linked in the mind with "rubies" and with "gems," whose price is above rubies, and with the forms of woman traced by that master hand, whose type is the rich, voluptuous Venus of the Netherlands and Germany, which, to those who prefer the

"ripe and real,

To all the nonsense of the *beau idéal*,"

seem, in the gorgeous, glowing graces, to make all other types of loveliness look pale, faint, and shadowy!

That Rubens's *chefs-d'œuvre* of redundant beauty are exactly to our own taste, we cannot assert; because, if we love Rubens much, we love truth more. There is a homely saying, that "every eye has its own beauty;" and we think that it is not an English eye that can delight in Rubens's women as women.

As works of art, and specimens of Hebe bloom, of almost real flesh and blood—of muscular development, and warm, palpitating life, they are perfection; and, doubtless, seem so to those accustomed to their plump prototypes in the country which sent a Queen to England and a wife to Henry VIII. in the shape of "Ann of Cleves."

We all know what the remorseless fiend, bluff Harry, said of that royal bride. Yet, in Germany, "Ann of Cleves" was a beauty.

Certainly, the longer we gaze at Rubens's women the lovelier they seem to us; and this is because they are true to nature—rather a full fed and plebeian nature, but nature still.

While we sicken of the impossible beauty inferior artists love to imagine, those large eyes, with eyelashes which, in real life, to be so apparent would (if in proportion) be as thick as whip cord—tiny mouths—straight, long noses—streamers of ribbon-like hair—and waists with which their owners

could not live a week—we learn, as we gaze on Rubens's women, to love them, because, though somewhat coarse, they are so true!

The birthplace of Peter Paul Rubens has been, and still is, the subject of furious controversy. It is encouraging to the sons of genius to see how eager great cities are to claim a great painter.

Nor cities alone. Nations contend for the honour of having given birth to a "monarch of the mind." And in this case, those two great classes which used to divide mankind, the aristocracy and the democracy (before there was "*middleocracy*"—greater than either), dispute to which belonged that gorgeous prince of painters—Peter Paul Rubens!

"Who shall decide when doctors disagree?"

And they have disagreed furiously about the place of Rubens's nativity. Dr. Wallraff, in 1822, caused two inscriptions to be placed on the *façade* of a house of no great pretension, in the Rue des Etoiles, at Cologne; one to inform the curious that in that house Peter Paul Rubens was born; the other, that Marie de Medicis, Queen of France, had closed her eyes in the very room in which the great painter first opened his: and bitterly did, and still do, the Belgians resent the words, "Our Peter Paul Rubens, the Apelles of Germany."

From the voluminous and prejudiced controversies on the subject of Rubens's native place and his descent, we—after a calm and dispassionate investigation—arrive at the conclusion that he was one of that numerous class in whose veins patrician and plebeian blood are blent with the happiest result—the dignity and beauty of the aristocratic element gaining strength, tone, colour, and expression from an admixture which equally affects and benefits the moral, intellectual, and physical man!

Never was there a more brilliant specimen of this mixed race than in Peter Paul Rubens, who, probably descended from a noble Styrian family, claimed as his ancestor Barthélémi Rubens, who accompanied Charles V. to the Diet of Worms, and shone amongst the most brilliant cavaliers of the Emperor's court at Brussels.

To some critics the gorgeous style of the great grandson of the courtly Barthélémi Rubens appears to be a natural consequence of his knightly descent, and of the memories and traditions of court life and luxury that must have coloured his boyish fancy.

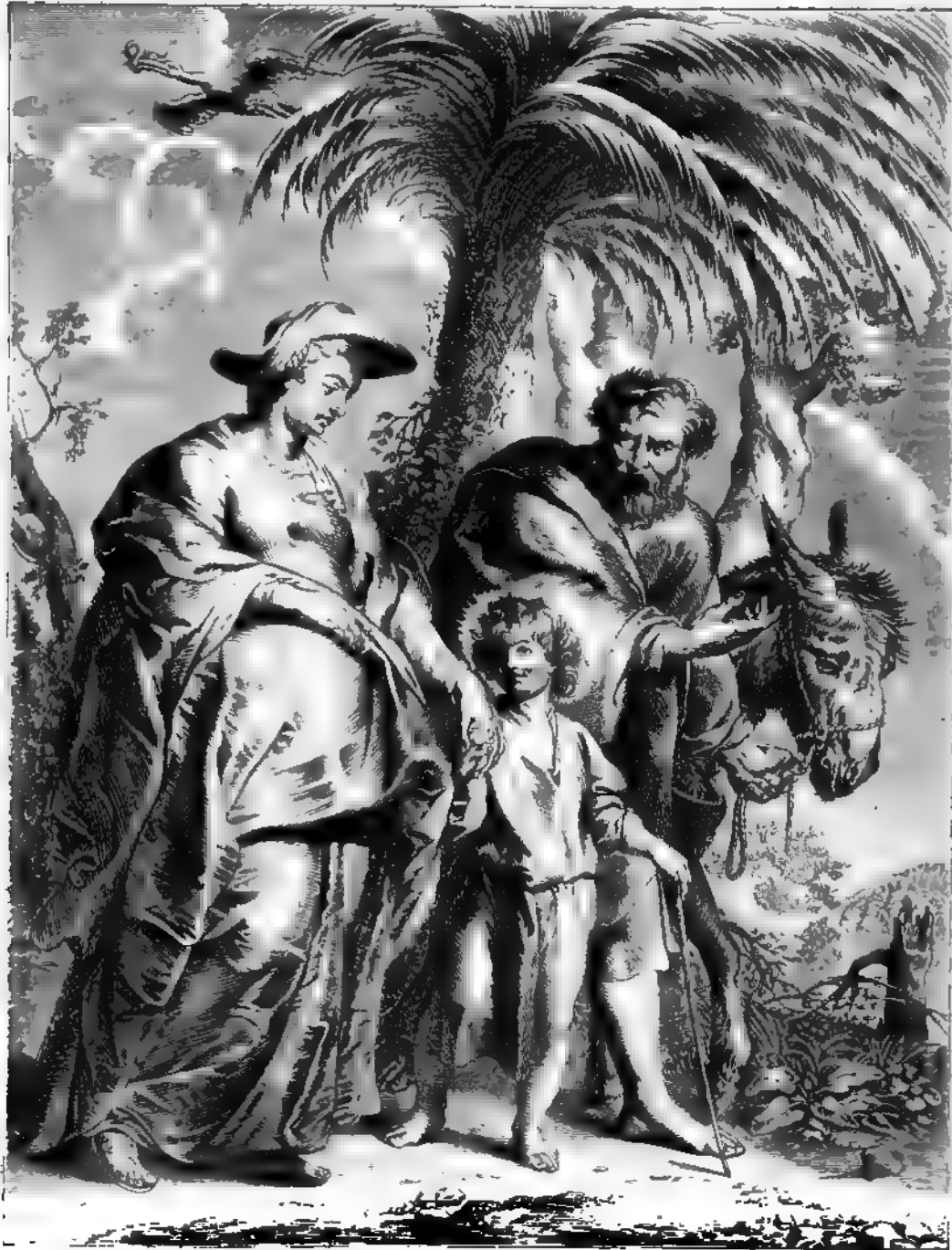
But it is certain that, whatever his father's family might have been, his mother (and the mother of a great genius always seems, in the history of that genius, to have been the presiding spirit) Marie Pypelinx, was a native of Antwerp; that his father, too, was born there; and that the only point at issue is, whether during the time that the Rubens family took refuge from political persecution, revolution, and fanaticism in Cologne, Peter Paul, the seventh son, was born there.

It is well known that his elder brother Philippe first saw the light at Cologne; and it is not likely that, in those days of political disturbance, quick tempers, and slow travelling, his mother returned to her native Anvers merely to give birth to Peter Paul there; for those were not the days of clairvoyance. She could not know that this child would be a painter—still less, the prince of painters: and though we regret the accident that robs Antwerp of its undivided right in the great Rubens, we believe that, though the Rubenses were a family long established at Antwerp, the pride of that family, and the idol of all the lovers of art, was born at Cologne, 1577.

Peter Paul's own assertion, "I was brought up at Cologne till I was ten years of age," carries this conviction along with it.

Peter Paul commenced his studies at the Jesuits' College at Cologne. He was remarkable for his quickness, ability, and application. He lost his father (who had been a peaceful man, a sheriff of Antwerp) in 1587. The terrible religious feuds, which had driven the Rubens family from Antwerp, had ceased. Antwerp was tranquil; and the mother of Rubens returned thither, and showed a great deal of energy and talent for business, in the way in which she contrived to recover a great part of her property.

It was from his mother that Peter Paul Rubens inherited that invaluable spirit of order and economy, that astute, careful, and perhaps grasping disposition, which, although it made him many enemies and detractors, caused him to be accused of avarice and suspected of double-dealing, made him so successful as a politician, so useful to the princes of his time, and so able an architect of his own great fortunes.



THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT. FROM A PAINTING BY RUBENS IN THE ART TREASURES EXHIBITION.

For ourselves, we think we see, throughout the life of Rubens, traces of his early training among the Jesuits of Cologne.

From a pupil of the Jesuits, the young Peter Paul Rubens became a page (it was a fashion of those days) to a lady of quality, the widow of the Count de Lalain.





THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS. FROM A PAINTING BY RUBENS.  
(A Sketch of which is contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by R. S. Holford, Esq.)

The silken sloth, the rapid gossip, and the idle, aimless life he led in this capacity, soon disgusted the active, aspiring mind of youthful genius. Rubens had a vocation; and he felt it. He entered the studio of Adam Van Noort, at that time a historical painter, of some renown as a colourist, but whose chief claim to be remembered consists in his having been for four years the master of Rubens.

From Van Noort's *atelier* Rubens removed to that of Otto-Venius, painter in ordinary to the Archduke Albert and the Infanta Isabella, governors of the Low Countries.

Otto-Venius was learned, a traveller, and a courtier; but he was a man rather of erudition than genius—a poor imitator of Correggio; and Rubens only acquired from Otto-Venius polished manners, a passion for *les belles lettres*, and the full taste of the allegorical in painting.

After four years frittered away in the studio of Venius, Rubens's strong sense and resolute will came to the aid of his great, though hitherto fettered genius, and he determined to visit Italy.

Otto-Venius kindly presented his darling pupil to the Archduke and the Infanta, who, enchanted with the personal beauty and elegance of the young artist, gave him letters of recommendation to several crowned heads.

But Bellori says Peter Paul Rubens needed no recommendation; that he had qualities certain to protect and promote him wherever he went. He says he was tall, well made, of an exquisite complexion, a strong constitution; at once dignified and gentle; his manners noble; his dress rich and tasteful; "and," adds Bellori, with Italian *naïveté*, "he generally wore a gold chain round his neck."

Yet in spite of his fine face, form, manners, and gold chain, we think Peter Paul was fortunate in the patronage and the recommendation of the Archduke and the Infanta. A good introduction is to most what a pedestal is to a statue.

In the year 1600 Rubens set off for Italy.

We must now leave for a time the history of the painter to dwell upon that of some of those great masterpieces of his genius, each of which forms at this very moment a shrine to which pilgrims from all parts of the world resort; and all who know and feel how closely united are the arts that support and those that adorn existence, how intimate the connection between the useful and the ornamental, and how much the love of the beautiful raises and refines the million, will rejoice to see one of the strongholds of commerce, MANCHESTER, become also the temple of high art, of genius, and fame.

Marie de Medicis, Queen of Henri Quatre, wishing to adorn her gallery at the Luxembourg with works of high art, desired Rubens to paint the history of her life, in twenty different pictures. Instead of complying with this rational and practicable request, Rubens, misled by his own passion and the age's taste for allegory, endeavoured to condense the twenty epochs of the queen's life fixed upon, in an allegorical picture of the wildest and most gorgeous abundance of every sort of living creature, and an affluence of costly accessories bewildering to contemplate. In far better taste was the picture which represents

#### "HENRI QUATRE INTRUSTING THE SYMBOL OF HIS POWER TO MARIE DE MEDICIS."

The portraits in this celebrated picture (which for execution and colouring ranks among the very best of Rubens's masterpieces) are admirable. The great hero-king, above the petty feeling that grudges power to woman, presents, with manly grace and martial confidence, to the partner of his bosom and his throne, the symbol of his power, the ball of independence. And the young prince, afterwards Louis XIII., holding his mother's fair hand, while his father leans on his shoulder, looks up with an expression in which awe of the ceremony seems to contend with the boy's interest in the ball. Marie de Medicis is fair, womanly, and stately. Rubens could not paint any female form without clothing her with a greater degree of *embonpoint* than suits our English ideas of beauty; but Marie's neck and bust do not offend by their voluptuous development as some of his beauties do, and the rich violet velvet robe in which the queen is arrayed, has a gorgeous and regal effect.

The architecture, the distance, and the middle distance of this picture are unexceptionable; but the tall, half-draped, bare-footed figure of some attendant (perhaps of allegorical importance quite incomprehensible) seems much in the way; and certainly we should prefer her room to her company!

A little later we will return to trace this great painter's triumphant progress through the old and beautiful cities of Italy; his sojourn in the different schools of art; his close and conscientious study

of all those great masters with whom his own genius had anything in common—a study which had nothing in it of servile imitation; since whatever style he adopted, whatever subject he selected, RUBENS was still RUBENS, in the *truth*, the *life*, the *energy*, the “*fougue*,”—a word the force of which is but faintly conveyed by the *dictionary* translation “fire”—of his gorgeous and glowing productions. Rubens's three first pictures of importance (painted after he had perfected his rich Flemish genius in the school that gave Raphael to the world) were destined to adorn the church of Mantua.

The Duke of Mantua was one of Rubens's kindest and most munificent patrons; and their acquaintance arose from their accidentally inhabiting the same hostelry. The succeeding three pictures by Rubens were, at the desire of the Archduke, who governed the Low Countries, appropriated to the church Santa Croce de Gerusalemme. They were “The Crown of Thorns,” “The Crucifixion,” “The Elevation of the Cross.” It was soon after that time, and while at Florence, that Rubens copied Leonardo da Vinci's “Last Supper,” and painted the well known and exquisite picture of “The Virgin and Child,” in a wreath of flowers, designed by his friend, Breughel de Velours.

#### “THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.”

It must always be a subject of regret that Rubens's taste in beauty was so coarse, and that his models, even for virgins and nymphs, were chosen among the blooming but plebeian daughters of the people.

In “The Flight into Egypt,” how much the charm of this admirable composition is destroyed by the massive, masculine figure of that young, fair girl,

“At once a mother and a maid;”

whom Carlo Dolce has made so touching, in the girlish grace so sweetly blent with the young mother's pride. Rubens's virgin looks rather like an amazon going to battle, than a terrified mother escaping with her treasure from that massacre of the Innocents of which Joseph had been forewarned.

A moonlight, as bright but far more soft than day, is one of the great beauties of this picture.

Of all Rubens's masterpieces there is none of which the subject is so harrowing in its sublimity, the conception so masterly, the grouping so effective, the handling so perfect, and the colouring so wondrous, as the justly celebrated

#### “DESCENT FROM THE CROSS.”

If it is impossible to gaze without thrilling emotions of gratitude, adoration, tender pity, awe, and burning wrath on a small engraving of this sublime picture, how much greater the effect of the inspired original, in which life is so life-like and death so ghastly and so deadly, that no one can gaze long and intently on that great masterpiece without feeling as if he was present at the consummation of that last great sacrifice, to which the believing and trembling spectator, be he who he may, owes his redemption; sceptics have been convinced, and infidels converted by such pictures as these. “*Les yeux sont tous-puissants sur l'âme*”—Men see, and they believe.

“The Descent from the Cross” is Scripture brought home to the heart and soul through the medium of the eyes. Who can gaze on that crucified Redeemer, pale in death, and not resolve not to crucify the Son of God afresh, and put to an open shame the martyred Lord who died for him? Some hypocritics object to the *reality* of this picture. They say it is less Jesus in his “three days' sleep” than a Hercules dead for evermore. They complain that already one perceives that ere long

“Decay's effacing fingers  
Shall sweep the lines where beauty lingers;”

that it is too much of “earth earthy,” too palpably “dust to dust;” that there is no gleam of immortality; that it is a picture for the “Sadducees who say there is no resurrection,” “nothing beyond the tomb!” Frivolous objections! Have they never heard of “the agony and bloody sweat”—of “the cross and passion,” followed by the holy resurrection and ascension?

Our Saviour suffered death upon the cross in the form of MAN; and it was not in soft sleep, but in ghastly death (the agonising death of the cross) that Rubens depicted Him: Rubens, whose inspiration

was from on high, as that of all true genius. He has done more for the faith and for his own fame by portraying the *real* than Lesueur, whose picture of the same dread scene some dreamers prefer to Rubens's, by idealising, or, as they say, *spiritualising* the final act of the great tragic drama in what they call "the poetry of Christianity!" To them the real grief of the mother is too human; they say that the *Virgin's* faith and resignation should have nerved the *mother's* heart, and that the *sentiment* of the picture should be "Faith, not Death, Triumphant." Surely "The Ascension" is the subject for that purpose!

Honour to Rubens, who has taken Scripture for his guide, and dared with his immortal pencil to tell the same dread tale which the Four Evangelists told with pens guided from on high.

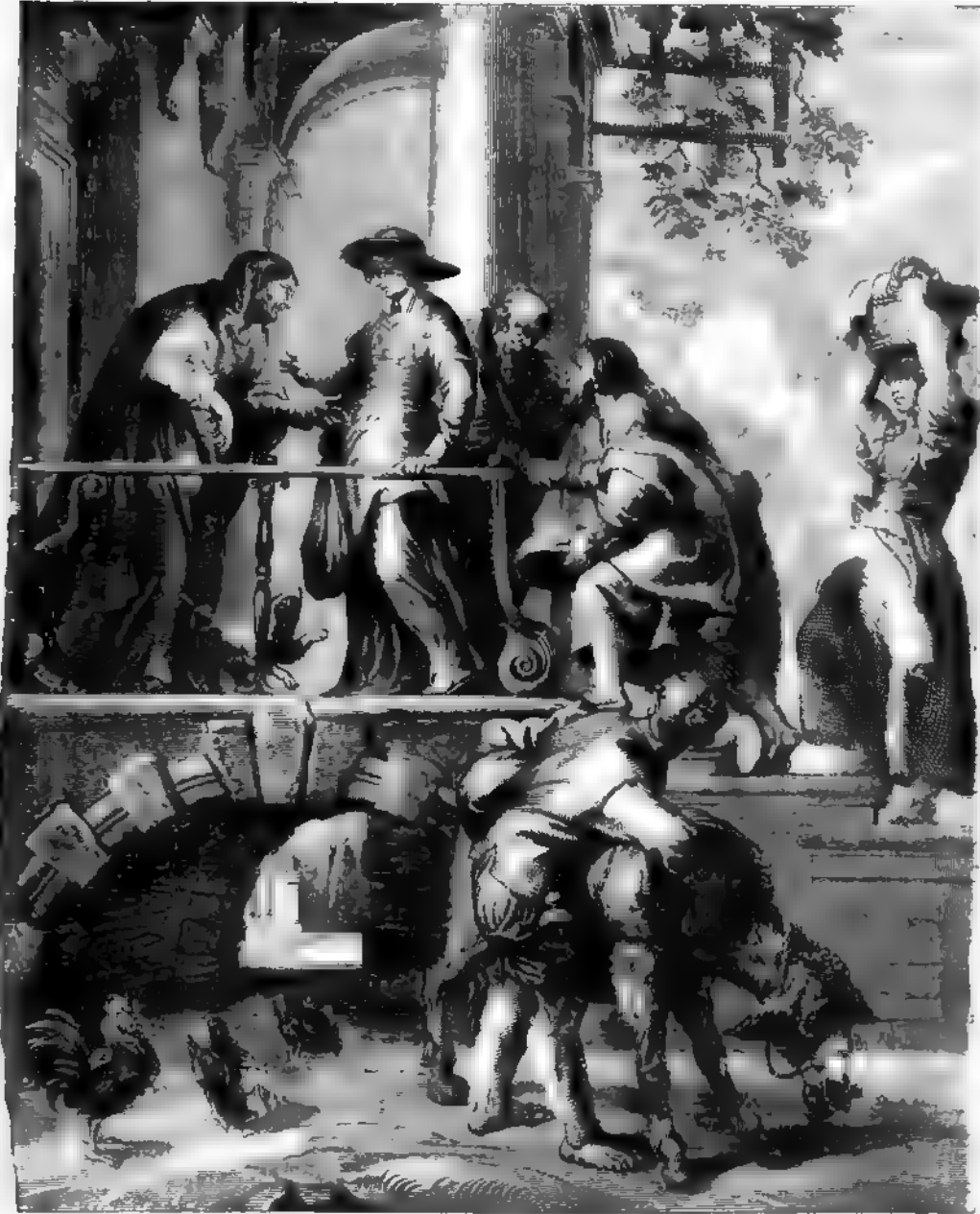


THE MARCH OF SILENUS. FROM A PAINTING BY RUBENS.

It is a curious fact, that the construction of Rubens's house was the origin of this picture. To enlarge his abode, he had infringed a little on the premises of a company of arquebusiers. A lawsuit was commenced against him by them, when M. Rockox (Rubens's friend) persuaded them to accept a compromise, for which purpose Rubens undertook to paint a picture for their chapel, in the Antwerp Cathedral. This picture is divided into three compartments, all of them representing scenes in the life of our Saviour; but it is only with the central piece, "The Descent from the Cross," that we have to do here.

It is composed, as we perceive in the engraving, of nine figures; two working men on the topmost steps of ladders are taking down our Saviour's body, with the help of a winding-sheet, which

one of them holds between his teeth, and which the other grasps with his left hand, leaving for support on the arms of the cross ; they bend over, to bear up with their other hands the body of Jesus, which Saint John, one foot on the ladder, and his back arched, upholds with all his strength. One of our



THE MEETING OF MARY AND ELIZABETH. FROM A PAINTING BY RUBENS.

Saviour's nail-pierced feet touches the fair shoulder of Mary Magdalen, that shoulder over which floats the golden hair that once wiped those blessed feet. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, placed opposite to each other on the middle steps of the ladder, form, with the two upper workmen, a square of powerful but somewhat common-looking figures. The Virgin Mary, upright at the foot of the cross,

stretches her arms, in all a mother's agony, to her dead son ; and Salome, on her knees, close to Mary, completes the picture. On the ground lie an inscription (we well know what inscription and who wrote it), a brazen vessel, where the crown of thorns and the nails of crucifixion are dipped in clotted blood. The crowd (then as now, greedy of horrors), feeding on the exhibition of mortal agony, has just left Golgotha to the shades of evening. The sky—black and lowering, Nature seeming to mourn over Calvary—is traversed by a stream of light, which illumines the shoulders and the hair of Mary Magdalen, and the faces of the Virgin, of Salome, and of Joseph. One of the unique and daring triumphs of the picture, in which the bold genius of Rubens is remarkable, is in the contrast of the brilliant white of the winding-sheet with the deadly pallor of the Saviour's body. Even Titian, so famous for the contrast of white draperies with white skins, has never ventured to dispense with a warm tint, like the reflection of sunset, on the folds of the linen. This great masterpiece was placed on the altar in the cathedral of Antwerp on the 16th of February, 1621 ; and Rubens received 2,400 florins for the whole work. A miserable sum for so much genius and labour, it seems to us ; but the value of money was different in those days ; and we may hope the compromise with the company of arquebusiers, to which it owed its origin, was some profit or some saving to the great painter. At any rate, Rubens lived like a prince among princes ; and was always filling his coffers with gold and his house with articles of *vertu* and treasures of all kinds.

#### "THE MARCH OF SILENUS,"

in which Rubens's love of allegory (acquired under his old master, Otto-Venius) contends with his own delight in the real and the true, has in it much that is jovial, but nothing that is disgusting. In the hands of meaner artists, Silenus is generally made too revolting. The Falstaff of Shakespeare and the Silenus of Rubens have much in common. A certain jovial grace, and all pervading good humour, redeems them from the swinish sottishness generally associated with the votaries of the jolly god. The Bacchante has all the abundance of flesh and richness of colouring which Rubens (with his wife Isabella as his model) delighted to depict. But what offends in the eye in "The Lily of Eden"—the Virgin mother of our Lord—is admirably in keeping with our idea of that daughter of rosy wine, the Bacchante ! The fairies that uphold the reeling deity are—with their low brows, and sensual lips and leering eyes, their strong limbs and weak intellects—what excess makes even the loftiest, far more brutes than men. Even the children look half tipsy ; and the life-like he-goat is a toper, we are sure. The overhanging clusters of rich grapes, and the emerald foliage and tendrils of the vine, give a gorgeous richness to this singular picture.

#### "THE MEETING OF MARY AND ELIZABETH."

This painting of "The Meeting of Mary and Elizabeth" is one of the most celebrated *chefs-d'œuvre* of the great Flemish painter. Rubens was of all the eminent masters of ancient or modern times the most prolific. In the Louvre there are no less than forty-three of his productions, twenty-one of which constitute that collection which is known by the name of the Gallery of Medicis. They were brought from the Palace of the Luxembourg, where they had been placed by order of Marie de Medicis, for whom they were originally painted ; and they consist of a series of allegorical pictures, which were valued, after the Restoration of the Bourbons, at the enormous sum of eleven millions of francs. "The Kermesse," or village festival, and "The Rainbow," which we shall presently describe, form also a part of the Art Treasures of the Louvre. The first of these landscapes was valued at 80,000 francs in the time of Napoleon I., and at 100,000 after the restoration of Louis XVIII. ; the second at 30,000 francs during "l'Empire," and at 40,000 in the time of the Bourbons. Russia is rich in the productions of Rubens, and "La Visitation," or the meeting of Mary and Elizabeth, from which our engraving is copied, is in the collection of the Imperial Museum of the Hermitage. The conception of the piece is highly artistic, and the attitude of Elizabeth as she greets the Holy Virgin beautifully illustrative of the description given of the meeting in the inspired narrative of the Evangelist. She shows by her expressive gestures as she points to her cousin's form and her own the homage already paid by the embryo baptist to the unborn Redeemer. No other painter has translated upon canvas so boldly and graphically the passage in St. Luke : "And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a

city of Juda; and entered into the house of Zacharias and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: and she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord." The handling, colouring, and tone of this picture are worthy of all praise; and although we cannot but regret that the painter has made the Holy Virgin so massive in her proportions, and so much more like the landlady of some Flemish *auberge* than the virgin bride of Joseph, we fully appreciate the merits of the *tout ensemble* of the picture.

#### "VENUS AND CUPIDS,"

By many pronounced Rubens's *chef-d'œuvre*, is a production of which we, whose *beau-ideal* is not the Flemish Venus, cannot speak with the rapture which some feel or affect. However, we must own, that in spite of the nudity of the figure of Venus, there is an atmosphere of chastity, a "robe of innocence," such as the hymn we learnt in infancy tells us Eve wore in paradise, around Rubens's Venus. She is a fine, handsome, young Flemish matron, who has had three children at a birth, and need not bring any one of them up by hand, overflowing, as she does, with the milk of human kindness; and she is not an unpleasing object to contemplate; but she has nothing in common with "foam-cradled Aphrodite, laughter-fed!" The cestus of the Paphian Goddess would not meet round that substantial waist. The Cupid at the breast is as little like

"The mischievous boy,  
Who uses the heart like a toy,"

as his mother is like the Cytherea of the poets. There is something sensual, and of the sucking-pig, in the "successful candidate;" but in the Love, while animated by hope, and not satiated by enjoyment—the expectant, aspiring Love, so eager for his turn, there is exquisite grace and beauty. Possibly, with his passion for allegory, Rubens had a deep meaning in the different expressions of successful and aspiring love, while something of the sickness of hope, too long deferred, may be traced in the anxious and yet weary attitude of the third Cupid. The rose-tree, if rose-tree it is meant to be, is unlike any rose-tree known to floriculture. The queen of flowers is as much misrepresented here as the Queen of Love—which is strange, as Rubens, unlike most great historical painters, excelled in flowers. "Great Homer sometimes nods," and though this picture is a superb specimen of colouring, handling, muscular development, tone, breadth, and grouping, it is more like Charity with her little ones, or Eve with a young family growing up around her, and "nothing to wear," than Venus when she had once landed from her sea-shell, and was never seen abroad except when "attended by the Graces."

#### "SONS OF RUBENS,"

Rubens was twice married. His first wife was Isabella Brandt, whose redundant proportions he has reproduced in all his pictures of women: she died in July, 1626. In writing to apprise his friend Valavès of the affliction with which he had been visited, he says:—"Yes, my friend, I have lost the best of wives. I might—what do I say?—I ought to cherish her memory, because she was exempt from all the failings of her sex." But Houbraken maliciously remarks that she had, on the contrary, not only many other failings, but one which, although the worst, is unfortunately the most common. Vandyck, the pupil of Rubens, shared with his master, as Houbraken informs us, the heart she had consecrated at the altar to her husband. In some of his subsequent pictures, Rubens revenged the conjugal infidelity of his spouse. In the celebrated piece of "The Last Judgment," a demon seizes in his claws the figure of the resisting Isabella, and plunges with her into the fiery abyss.

In the year 1630 he espoused Helen Forment, a lovely young girl of sixteen, who bore him five children; and thus, to use the allegorical language of a foreign biographer of the celebrated painter, crowned with flowers and fruits this advanced period of his life. But Campo Weyerman, in commenting upon this preposterous *mésalliance* (for sixteen and sixty may be *mated*, but never can be *matched*),



VENUS AND THE LOVES. FROM A PAINTING BY ALBERT DÜRER.





THE SONS OF RUBENS. FROM A PAINTING BY RUBENS.

tells us that Rubens soon discovered that "the luxuries of a court, a lovely young wife, and the wearing torture of the gout, are three blessings which an old man would do well to eschew."

Whether the catastrophe of life which comes sooner or later to all of us was accelerated by gaiety

or gout, we do not know; but it is a fact that he did not survive this imprudent marriage very long, and that, notwithstanding the vigour of his constitution, the activity of his habits, and the muscular strength of his frame, he died long before the term allotted by the Psalmist to man.

The accompanying engraving, from a painting of his sons by himself, represents, in all probability, two of the children of his first marriage; as, at the time of his death, the eldest of the issue of his second marriage could not have been much more than eight, whereas the taller of the youths in our engraving is evidently between twelve and thirteen years of age. His cast of features is decidedly Flemish, and we recognise in him a likeness to the female face which Rubens so often reproduced on canvas in his sacred subjects. His "Susannah and the Elders" was no doubt copied from his wife, and bears a strong resemblance to this youth. She is, in face and figure, a Venus of the true Flemish type—coarse, broad, fleshy, and voluptuous.

#### "THE RAINBOW."

In every style of painting Rubens excelled all his contemporaries; and whether he attempted history, allegory, *tableau de genre*, landscape, portrait, animals, or fruits and flowers, he was equally admirable. His merry Château de Steen was situated between Vilvorde and Malines, and his landscapes were generally faithful representations of scenes in the neighbourhood. Such, for instance, is "The Rainbow," from which our engraving is copied. There is a transparency in his light, and a richness or redundancy in his conceptions which have no precedents in nature. The scene of "The Rainbow" is, nevertheless, essentially Flemish; and to those who have sojourned in the country, and have made themselves acquainted with the peculiarities of a Flemish village, and the characteristics of its inhabitants, this picture will be highly interesting. The Flemings are not a go-ahead or progressive nation. In their language, their habits, their fashions, their occupations, their amusements, and their style of buildings, they are pretty much the same as they were in the days of Rubens; and the country merry-making, which in that country is called "Kermesse" to this day, and of which he has given so lively a representation, might stand, with little alteration, for a picture of the same scene at the present date.

To those who know how prominent a part Rubens the great painter played in the world, his life would be a puzzle, but for the explanation given by his biographers of the mode in which he apportioned his day. He always rose early, and was punctual in attendance at morning service. But great moderation in his diet, and regularity in the disposition of his time, were the secrets of his success. Horse exercise, when the weather permitted, a naturally vigorous constitution, and a great enthusiasm in his profession, contributed to the preservation of health, amid all the wear and tear of constant employment.

There was a great deal of genuine piety and of strong natural affection in Peter Paul Rubens. He was at Genoa, *fêted*, courted, and working hard at "the art that can immortalise," when a letter from Antwerp announced that his mother was dangerously ill. Rubens travelled night and day, almost frantic with filial anxiety. He arrived at Antwerp too late. His mother was no more. Rubens was not an ordinary man, nor was his grief of an ordinary kind. Filial devotion is an almost universal attribute of the highest order of genius. "The best heads have generally the best hearts," says a great writer; and the best hearts are sure to feel most keenly the loss of that first, truest, fondest friend, *never to be replaced on earth!* She who taught the lip to lisp its first prayer, who watched so patiently over sportive childhood, giddy youth, daring manhood, and whom few good men when they weep over her grave can think of without a self-reproach that they had not cherished her more and appreciated her better;—a household martyr, a guardian angel!—she seems to all good men where "the late remorse of love" is busy at their hearts, and where love to the best conscience whispers "too late!"

Rubens' mother was an excellent mother, though a careful forecasting woman of business. It was for her children she planned and toiled to recover her estates on her return to Antwerp; and though she denied herself, she never denied them the luxuries and comforts of life. She trained them to habits of piety and labour; and they loved her living, and mourned and revered her dead.

Peter Paul regretted her so passionately that for four months he hid himself and his sorrow in the Abbey of St. Michael, where this loved mother was buried. And the natural consequence of this indulgence in solitude of a grief so unavailing and so intense, was a fit of that mental malady to which genius is so liable—*melancholia*. By degrees, however, his active mind recovered its tone; and genius contended successfully with sorrow for one so dear to fame. The Archdukes of the Low Countries, to prevent his return to that soft and fair Ausonia for which he pined, and to secure in Peter Paul Rubens not merely the artist, but the diplomatist, at a time when their relations with Holland were complicated and unsatisfactory, bound him to their service by a very handsome pension, which his nephew and biographer, Philip Rubens, calls a golden chain. He took up his abode at Antwerp to keep aloof from the time-engulphing fascinations of the court at Brussels, and to be at hand in case he was needed either as an artist or an ambassador by the princes he served.

The truce of 1609, signed at Antwerp and at the Hague, made him hope that peace was restored, at least for a time, and he married the daughter of a very wealthy senator of Antwerp, Isabella Brandt. The style of her beauty is familiar to the world, as Rubens has so often introduced its somewhat gorgeous and voluptuous graces where a more chaste, refined, and delicate type of loveliness would have produced a finer effect.

Rubens bought a large house on the Place de Meer, and had it entirely rebuilt in the Italian style. Between the entrance and the garden rose a glazed rotunda; and in this museum he collected and displayed all the objects of vertu, gems of art, pictures, statues, busts, *bas-reliefs*, medals, &c. &c., which he had procured at an immense expense during his travels in Italy, and to which he was constantly adding new and costly curiosities.

Rubens's fortune increased with his fame. From the proudest monarch to the simple amateur, none could be content without some work of his; and his prolific pencil kept pace with this immense demand.

In every branch of his great art Rubens was pre-eminent—history, allegory, home scenes, landscape, portrait, animals, flowers, and fruit. He bequeathed to posterity masterpieces in all these styles.

Intrusted by princes with the management of political negotiations demanding consummate tact, Rubens often owed his success to the triumphs of his art. His style, naturally rich and gorgeous, acquired additional brilliancy from his intercourse with courts.

A truce of twelve years, which had been signed between Spain and Holland, was on the point of expiring, and Belgium, in the year 1619, exhausted and powerless, longed for peace. The execution of Barneveldt, whose impassioned harangues had long fired the democratic party with a hatred of Spain, left the field open to the machinations of the Prince of Orange. Ambitious and unscrupulous, Maurice (the Prince of Orange) was secretly anxious to conciliate Spain, and Archduke Albert favoured his views; but Philip III., King of Spain, dazzled by the prospect of an alliance with England, listened to the flattering suggestions of Count Gondomar, his ambassador at the court of St. James's. From him he learnt that the Prince of Wales (afterwards Charles I.) was commissioned to invade Holland as the ally of Spain, and to ask the hand of the Infanta in marriage.

On the other hand, Louis XIII. of France, eager to counterbalance the united influences of England and the French protestants, was negotiating with the King of Spain an offensive alliance against Holland, which he stigmatised as "the focus of heresy." A lady of the name of Tserclaes, of high rank, mature age, and great Catholic enthusiasm, was the negotiator between the Archduke and the Prince of Orange, who had already agreed upon the price of his treachery to the seven united provinces, when the sudden death of the King of Spain put a stop to the negotiations.

Peace was, however, so necessary to the belligerents, that the expiration of the truce was not immediately followed by the resumption of hostilities. The negotiations in which Rubens and the Lady Tserclaes acted the most conspicuous parts were still carried on, and the painter cherished the hope of gathering round Isabella a liberal party, free from Spanish influence, and capable of restoring to the low countries, weakened and wasted by a long war, with the blessings of peace, their wonted prosperity. His motives were, however, misconstrued, his patriotism was stigmatised as interested, and an emissary of Richelieu's, with some local influence at La Hague, denounced him as an *intrigant*, who made use of the Lady Tserclaes only as a venal tool.

Grossed as he was by politics, he did not neglect his painting, but the number of his produc-

tions must appear almost miraculous to any one who had no previous knowledge of the manner in which he apportioned his time. He rose every morning at four, and after attending mass, commenced the labours of the day in his *atelier*. In his diet he was habitually abstemious, as he feared the effect



THE RAINBOW. FROM A PAINTING BY EUGÈNE.

of good living upon his intellectual powers. On fine evenings he delighted in displaying his skill, on the ramparts of Antwerp, in the management of a spirited Andalusian horse, whose arched neck and trailing mane he has so often represented on the canvas. With the artistic and literary celebrities of Europe he corresponded regularly ; and with Peireac, the famous antiquary of Provence, whom Balzac

*in his* valuable letters has described as "a piece of the wreck of antiquity—a relic of the golden age," *he was* on the most intimate terms.

It was through the influence of Peiresc that Rubens got leave to dispose of his engravings in France. The privilege, however, cost him an expensive law-suit, in which he was accused of with-

THE CHATEAU DE ST. GERMAIN. FROM A PAINTING BY RUBENS.



drawing large sums of money from the kingdom by means of his plates. These two eminent men managed to obtain the earliest information on all subjects, whether political, literary, scientific, or artistic, and were continually exchanging books and pamphlets in various languages.

Rubens's dissertations upon the theory of the human form, written about this time, were some of

the most original and interesting of his literary productions. He lays down as a thesis that man made after God's own image, is the prototype of created beauty. Female beauty he considers as second only in the order of things, and as a derivative merely, although it may surpass in elegance and grace the beauty of man. After the fall, Rubens supposes that the form of man became gradually degenerate, and began to borrow from the brute creation some of their characteristics and instincts. He is guilty of an inconsistency (no rare occurrence with Rubens) when he first describes man as a prototype, and then sets him down as a compound of various elements. He recognises in the human figure those three geometrical archetypes—the cube, the sphere, and the cone: the sphere is developed in his head, the cube in his carcass, and the cone in his tapering limbs. The cube predominates in muscular and powerful frames; such, for instance, as those of heroes and athletes. In the female form, the contour is spherical; and Rubens sees in the roundness of the waist, the neck, and the shoulders of the fair sex, the predominance of the sphere. In the classical age, the artists borrowed from human models a more correct notion of feminine beauty than Rubens did from the stout and square-built originals he found in his own country. The line of beauty lies between the two extremes; it is marred by a redundancy or a deficiency of *embonpoint*. This Rubens laid down as a rule in his "theory of the human figure;" but his practice, like that of many a professor, did not agree with his precepts. His women are all gross, sensual, fleshy, and inelegant; but, at the same time, they are the faithful likenesses of those whom he chose for his models. His Mary Magdalene, in the great picture of "The Entombment of Christ," is the *facsimile* of the barmaid of some Flemish tavern.

#### "THE CHÂTEAU DE STEEN,"

The country house of Rubens—the favourite haunt of that prolific genius who, like our own great dramatist, "was not for an age but for all time." This picturesque and castellated country residence, with its embattled walls, turrets, and mimic fortresses—its encircling moat and stone bridge connecting its insular position with the mainland, is the type of the better class of *landgut*, or country seat, in Belgium and Germany.

In the architecture of these summer abodes the Flemings aim more at the picturesque and the ornamental than the useful and the comfortable. But as the *rentiers* of Belgium always spend their winters in town, and only pass two or three of the best months of the year at their "*châteaux de campagne*," they have no inducement for making them as warm, cheerful, and convenient as the spacious mansions of the English nobility and gentry, so poetically described by a modern poet:

"The stately homes of England,  
How beautiful they stand!  
Amid their tall ancestral trees,  
O'er all the blooming land."

But although not suited, like the "stately homes" of our own country, for a Christmas residence, these Belgian châteaux are very pleasant retreats in the hot months of July and August. Rubens was a magnificent entertainer, very fond of society, and a very agreeable companion. The spacious vestibules of this mimic fortress were no doubt the scene of many a jovial party, to which the genius and renown of the host gave an unwonted *éclat*. It was situated between Vilvorde and Malins, a country now intersected by railways, which form part of the great continental high-road to the Rhine. Though now traversed during the whole summer season by English tourists, at the time of Rubens the means of locomotion were so few and so expensive that the visits of our countrymen to Holland and Belgium were only undertaken with an especial object, and were often attended with considerable risk to person and purse.

Rubens's picture of "The Château de Steen," from which our engraving is copied, is valuable, not only as a *chef-d'œuvre* of the great master, but as an excellent specimen of Flemish scenery.

#### "SUSANNAH AND THE ELDERS."

Rubens could scarcely have selected from the sacred *répertoire* a subject less edifying. With Catholics, the Apocrypha, in which the story of "Susannah and the Elders" is found, is of equal authority with the rest of Scripture; and some of the tenets to which Protestants object most strongly are founded upon

passages in the Apocrypha—such, for instance, as praying for the dead. Without entering into any inquiry of the grounds of religious differences between Protestants and Catholics, whose conscientious scruples we equally appreciate and respect, we cannot but feel that the portion of the sacred volume which, for good reasons, we term “Apocrypha,” does not furnish the painter of the grand style with subjects so edifying and spiritualising as the rest of the Bible; and we therefore regret that Rubens ever lavished the resources of his genius upon a subject so unproductive as “Susannah and the Elders.” Unaccompanied, as it is, with any comments upon the conduct of the two hoary sinners, the picture is decidedly meretricious; and all the richness of the colouring, the life of the figures, the truth of the expression of the respective faces, and the artistic beauty and merit of the whole piece, cannot compensate for the objectionable images it must suggest to innocent and inexperienced minds. The undraped form of Susannah is a truthful representation of the Flemish model from which it was copied—fair, fat, and feminine, but without any of that grace, dignity, and vestal purity with which a Raphael or a Michael Angelo would have invested the same subject. The lascivious leer of the Elder who is tugging at the drapery is revolting in the extreme; and the attitude of the other Elder is even more objectionable, though the expression of his face is partly concealed. The conception of the whole picture is very natural, and the unities are well preserved.

#### “LA CONCLUSION DE LA PAIX.”

This beautiful masterpiece is one of the series of the allegorical subjects chosen by Rubens to illustrate the history of his patroness “Marie de Medicis.” These paintings are twenty-one in number, and consist of the following subjects:—“The Fate of Marie de Medicis,” “Her Birth,” “Her Education,” “Henry IV. Receiving the Portrait of Marie de Medicis,” “His Marriage with Marie,” “The Landing of Marie de Medicis at Marseilles,” “Solemnisation at Lyons of the Marriage of Henry IV.,” “The Birth of Louis XIII.,” “Henry IV. Intrusting the Symbol of his Power to the Queen” (an engraving of this celebrated picture appears in a previous number), “Coronation of Marie de Medicis,” “The Apotheosis of Henry IV.,” “The Government of the Queen,” “The Expedition of Marie de Medicis to the Port of C  ,” “The Exchange of the Princesses,” “The Prosperity under the Regency,” “The Majority of Louis XIII.,” “The Escape of the Queen to the Ch  teau de Blois,” “Her Reconciliation with her Son,” “La Conclusion de la Paix” (the picture from which our engraving is copied), “The Interview between Marie de Medicis and her Son,” “The Triumph of Truth.” The subject of our engraving formed one of the most important events in the life of Marie de Medicis. Mercury, the god of oratory, the messenger of Olympus, and the patron of thieves,—in fact,

“A god so various, that he seems to be  
Not one, but every god’s epitome,”

is of course present, holding in one hand his distinguishing *caduceus*, and with the other presenting Marie de Medicis, a portly dame of Dutch build, to the presiding deity of the Temple of Peace. The picture is highly allegorical. The demons of war, belching forth fire and destruction, are writhing with impotent rage and disappointment at the termination of their reign of terror. The now useless blade, arquebuse, helmet, breastplate, greaves, and gauntlet lie neglected on the ground, and peace and plenty succeed to the devastation of the fire and the sword.

After her reconciliation, at Angoul  me, with her son Louis XIII., in 1620, Marie de Medicis returned to Paris. At the recommendation of the Baron de Vicq, who was the ambassador at the Tuileries for the Low Countries, she sent for Rubens, as she wished to enrich the walls of her own palace of the Luxembourg with some of the masterpieces of this great painter. He came at her bidding, and was commissioned by the Queen to illustrate the history of her life in twenty-one masterpieces. Rubens, however, instead of a *bon   fide* chronicle contained in successive tableaux, painted a series of allegories, in which he has strangely blended the real and the imaginary, the heavenly and the earthly, the material and the spiritual. Christianity and heathenism go hand in hand, history and tradition are so mixed up together, that it is difficult to separate the one from the other; and the gods and goddesses of Olympus mingle in the tableaux on an equality with the Royal race of France.

In the confusion of subjects Rubens followed the fashion of the time. He had acquired a taste for this style of painting while studying under Otto Venius, who has written a book upon allegory, adorned with symbolical figures, suited only, in the opinion of Reynolda, for the amusement of children. The gallery of Medicis, however, such as it is, and the other productions of Rubens, which have been transferred from the Luxembourg to the Louvre, are marvels in the way of colouring. The



SUSANNAH AND THE ELDERS. FROM A PAINTING BY RUBENS.

allegorical history of Marie de Medicis has been reproduced in Gobelin tapestry, and with very good effect. Marie de Medicis was fond of watching the progress of her favourite painter in his *atelier*, and one day she ordered M. de Bautru to introduce Rubens to a select circle of the ladies of her court.

"The Duchess of Guimenée," said Rubens, "eclipses all the rest by her grace and beauty."

"She is, indeed, singularly beautiful," said M. de Bautru : "one of the wonders of the world !"





LA CONCLUSION DE LA PAIX. FROM A PAINTING BY RUBENS.

"Is there, among the ladies of my court," said the Queen, after a pause of a few minutes, "any one who surpasses in beauty all you have seen in your travels!"

"If I were a Paris," said Rubens, "I would bestow the golden apple upon the Duchess of Guimenes."

"You are a good judge," replied the Queen.

Rubens was all his life insatiable for gold. The sums he demanded for his paintings were exorbitant; and his eagerness for immediate payment such, that he often gave great offence to his best customers. The moment he had completed for the Queen her allegorical history, he complained bitterly to one of his friends that he was not paid; and then trembled lest his greediness for gain should lose him the patronage of the best customer he had ever had. An alchemist, who alleged that he had discovered the philosopher's stone, offered to share with Rubens the proceeds of the discovery, if the painter would advance him a small sum for the completion of his laboratory.

"My good friend," said Rubens, "I have anticipated your discovery by twenty years: through the assistance of my palette I can turn everything to gold."

Rubens, like Raphael, collected around him a host of promising young pupils, most of whom became, in their turn, great painters. Vandyck, Jordaens, Van Egmont, Sneyders, and Vildens were among the number. Some of the most famous pictures in the Louvre were the work of the pupils from sketches by Rubens, and were afterwards touched up by the great master.

The copper engravings of his best pieces were etched, under his own direction, by Bolswert, Dupont, and Vosterman; and in some few instances the engravings are the work of his own hands.

The loss of his wife, Isabella Brandt, in the year 1620, was a terrible affliction to Rubens, who could find no alleviation for his grief but in a constant succession of scene and society. He made a tour through Holland, and visited, in his travels, all the celebrated Dutch painters of the time.

At the request of Philip IV. he undertook a journey into Spain, and during his stay in the Spanish capital he produced the following remarkable pieces: "The Rape of the Sabines," "The Reconciliation of the Romans and the Sabines," "The Triumph of the Church." His letters from Madrid, written during his visit to Philip IV., give a graphic account of the dissolute manners of the court, of the pride of the nobility, and of the decline of the Spanish monarchy.

From Spain Rubens passed into Portugal with the intention of spending some time with John, Duke of Braganza. But the prince, fearing the expense which the entertainment of Rubens and his suite of Spanish and Flemish gentlemen would entail upon him, sent a messenger beforehand to tell him that he could not receive him, as matters of importance required his immediate presence in Lisbon. He begged the painter to accept a *douceur* of fifty pistoles as a pledge of his regard. Rubens refused the money politely, intimating that he had taken the precaution of bringing with him a thousand pistoles for the casualties of his journey. Obligated to accept for the night the hospitality of a monastery, the painter was struck, the next day, during the celebration of high mass, by a picture on the wall which had all the characteristics of his own style. He made every inquiry among the monks, who were either unwilling or unable to tell him the name of the artist. At last the prior said to him in a tone which was intended to put an end to all further inquiry—

"We must not mention the name of the painter."

"Not when Rubens supplicates!"

At a name so widely known, the monk hesitated. "The artist," said he, "who produced that picture is dead to the world. He is a monk."

"A monk!" exclaimed Rubens; "then he hides his light under a bushel. Father, tell me his name and that of the monastery to which he has retired. He must not remain there, for he was destined to shine like a light before men."

The praise of Rubens was too much for the susceptible monk, who, overcome by the inward struggle between duty and inclination, fell down in a swoon, from which he never recovered.

The name of this monk, prior of the monastery, and painter of the masterpiece which had excited so much admiration in Rubens, was Xavier Collantes.

#### "THE KERMESSE."

The Flemings are a singular people; they cling to ancient habits, customs, prejudices, and precedents with the tenacity of the Chinese. Thanks to English capitalists, railroads have been constructed in Belgium, and trains, in which both the engine-drivers and stokers are for the most part English, have been substituted for the ponderous barges which had for centuries plied between the different

towns, at the rate of three or four miles an hour, on the numerous canals which intersect the country, and for the diligences which crawled at the same pace over the paved roads of the Low Countries; but, in all other respects, the Flanders of the latter half of the nineteenth century is pretty much the same as the Flanders of the whole of the seventeenth. The travellers and tourists who are whisked through the country in express trains are scarcely aware that those striking evidences of enlightenment and civilisation, the rail and the electric telegraph, have introduced few corresponding changes into the country whose level and well-cultivated surface they admire from the windows of their *coupé*. Yet so it is. The quaint dress, the barbarous language (a corrupt *mélange* of English, French, and German, and which sounds, in the mouths of the natives, more like the inarticulate gibberings of some savage tribe than the conventional tongue of a European nation), and the mediæval mode of life, remain unaltered. Leave the station and stroll a few miles into the country, and you will find that with the rail you have left progress behind you. Everything in the interior is pretty much the same as it was two centuries ago; and, if you are fortunate, you will light upon a "kermesse," or festival (periodical in all Flemish villages), precisely similar to that which Rubens has so graphically represented in the painting from which our engraving is copied.

The Flemish boor is the type of the whole class of boors. He is proverbially coarse, rude, ignorant, awkward, and unwashed; he is elephantine in his gambols, and his gestures, like his gibberish, are entirely deficient in grace, dignity, and decorum. He is, indeed, but little removed in intelligence from the cattle in whose society he passes so much of his time; and, if we had no better proof of the fact than the evidence of the Flemish boor, we might almost doubt whether the human intellect is really progressive, so little is he changed, in taste, tone, or manner, from the time

"When wild in woods the noble savage ran."

Look at the coarse behaviour of these indecent clowns; see how, *ritu ferarum*, they are treating their "gentle" helpmates. The piece, in some of its phases, rather resembles a "Rape of the Sabines" than an ordinary village merrymaking. But wild, rude, and even revolting as many would consider the scene in most of its details, it is nevertheless true to nature.

"Tipsy shout and jollity,  
Frolic and frivolity,"

are in the ascendant; and, although the style of the picture is not that in which Rubens achieved his world-wide reputation, neither Van Ostade, Teniers, nor Wilkie ever designed any piece more truly characteristic of national manners. Rubens was, *par excellence*, a painter of "the grand style." His sacred and allegorical pieces are those upon which his fame principally depends; but the amazing versatility of his genius enabled him to adopt any other style, and make it as much his own as that to which he had devoted his time and energies. The multitude of figures introduced into "The Kermesse," the variety of their expressions, attitudes, and pursuits, make of it an elaborate picture, which the more it is studied the more it will be appreciated. Connoisseurs familiar with the manners of the Flemish will at once recognise the merits of this masterpiece.

Before Rubens left Spain the title of Secretary of the Privy Council was conferred upon him, an honour to which his son Albert was intended to succeed.

But titles and orders were all that Philip IV. could confer upon the painter, so bankrupt was his exchequer and so impossible was it to squeeze any money out of the people of Spain. The paintings were, however, paid for by an order upon the Infanta, or rather upon those rich Belgian provinces which never dishonoured any of their sovereign's drafts upon them.

After passing a few days at Paris on his route home, Rubens set out for London by way of Brussels. Charles I., a liberal patron of the arts, welcomed him with great cordiality; and as a proof of the estimation in which he held his genius, created him a knight, and presented him with a magnificent sword and a diamond collar.

At the instigation of Rubens, the King purchased for £20,000 the beautiful cartoons which were for sale in Holland, and which had formerly belonged to the Duke of Mantua.

Rubens painted, during his sojourn in England, the allegorical decorations of the ceilings of the palace of Whitehall. The apotheosis of James I. is a meretricious conception, in which the cardinal



THE SEMELE FROM A PAINTING BY RUBENS

virtues are represented by members of Parliament, and in which Prudence, under the form of Apollo, holds in her hand a cornucopia. For his paintings at Whitehall, Rubens received the sum of £3,000. They were touched up by Cipriani in the year 1780.

As he had come to England with credentials from Philip of Spain, he was treated at the English court as an Ambassador Plenipotentiary.



FRANÇOIS SNEYDER.

An English nobleman one day found Rubens at his easel, and in rather an ironical tone said, "I see that the ambassador of His Most Catholic Majesty employs his leisure time in painting." "Say rather," replied Rubens, who thought that the triumphs of art ought to take precedence of diplomatic pretensions, "that I employ my leisure time in doing duty as ambassador."

Disturbances again occurred in the Low Countries. The influence of Holland prevailed in Flanders; and Cardinal Richelieu, by means of bribery and intrigue, at last effected his object. Rubens left England for the purpose of negotiating, in the name of Spain, terms with Holland; but the representatives of the United Provinces, who had compelled the Archduchess Isabella to agree to a treaty with Holland without the concurrence of Spain, refused to acknowledge the extraordinary powers conferred upon Rubens. The Duke of Arschot was commissioned to demand of him his credentials, which Rubens, with a weakness incomprehensible in a man of his genius and position, immediately delivered.

The Archduchess, then Regent of the Netherlands, had the meanness to recall her ambassador, who, retiring from office, again tasted in the cultivation of the arts those intellectual delights of which diplomacy had for a time deprived him. The death of the Infanta, which happened soon after, relieved him for ever from the enervating intercourse of courts.

Rubens had been four years a widower when he married the young and lovely Helen Forment. Of the consequences of this marriage, and of the influence it exercised over the destiny of the painter, we have already spoken.

The Cardinal Ferdinand, Infant of Spain and brother of Philip IV., entered upon his Regency of the Netherlands after the bloody battle of Nordlingen. The city of Antwerp celebrated his arrival in

May, 1635, with great pomp and parade. Rubens had the sole management of the festival, and designed with his own hand the slightly coloured sketches which adorned the eleven triumphal arches erected along the route of the prince.

"The Martyrdom of St. Peter," in the Cathedral of Cologne, painted in 1636, was the last *chef-d'œuvre* of this great master. A letter written by Rubens to the celebrated sculptor, Duqueanoy, who had just at this time put the finishing touch to a statue of St. Andrew, for the cathedral of St. Peter's at Rome, is the latest record we have of his life. "Your glory and renown," said Rubens to the sculptor, "shed a halo round the nation to which you belong. If the weight of years, and a torturing gout, which drains the very fountain of life, did not keep me a close prisoner, I would start at once for Rome, and feast my eyes upon the immortal productions of your genius; but, as I am denied this gratification, I can only hope that we shall have you very speedily among us. Grant that you may arrive before death, which will soon close my eyes to everything around me, deprives me of the inexpressible delight I should feel in gazing upon the marvels wrought by your hand." This touching and gratifying letter had scarcely reached its destination, when an attack of his painful malady deprived Flanders of its greatest ornament and the world of its chief painter. Rubens expired of gout in the stomach, on the 30th of May, 1640, in the sixty-fourth year of his age.

The nobility, the clergy, the civil functionaries, and the tradespeople of Antwerp, accompanied the funeral to the collegiate church of St. James, where, in a vault belonging to the Forment family, was deposited the coffin which inclosed the dust of this immortal painter.

Three days after the burial a funeral service was celebrated in his honour, more costly and magnificent than any that ever graced the obsequies of Flemish prince or potentate.

Treasures of various kinds were found in his bureau—precious stones, articles of vertu, every kind of curiosity; six gold chains, several rings, keepsakes of different sovereigns; the diamond hat-band which had been presented to him by our Charles I., and which was worth, at least, £2,000; ivory figures, crystals, medals, ancient and modern; agates from the East; cornelian and onyx seals; and more than two hundred and thirty masterpieces of Italian, Flemish, and Dutch painters, of which eighty-three were by Rubens. The whole collection was valued at more than a million of francs.

#### HIS MERITS.

In every style of art, as we had occasion to state in one of our critical notices of a landscape by Rubens, this great Flemish master was equally successful. His prolific pencil produced, with a rapidity and skill never equalled, in either ancient or modern times, masterpieces in history, allegory, *genre*, landscape, portrait, animals, fruit, and flowers. The cornucopia, which he so frequently reproduced upon canvas, was a symbol of the fertility of his genius. Inexhaustible, like that emblem of plenty, he astonished the world by the versatility of his talent. He generally sketched the outline of his pictures with the brush—a careless mode of procedure much adopted by the painters of his day. This practice exposed him to the criticism of inaccurate drawing. In brilliancy and freshness of colouring he surpassed the most popular painters of Venice; but in the harmony of the different parts, in inspiration, grace, and sublimity, he was far behind them. There is occasionally a rawness in his painting, attributable, in a great measure, to the exclusive use, in some of his pieces, of four colours, consisting of the most glaring and the most delicate tints of his palette. But in his backgrounds Rubens is unexceptionable. He has here blended, with consummate skill, in one harmonising whole, the various hues upon his canvas. His portraits, which surpass, in lusty life and animal beauty, the best productions of Titian and Vandyck, are inferior in grandeur and dignity to the *chef-d'œuvre* of these two great masters. Nevertheless, the "Chapeau de Paille," which Rubens prized more than anything he had done, and which he would never part with, is a marvel of his art. In his classical subjects he is inferior to Poussin, who seemed far more familiar with the forms and fashions of antiquity than with those of the world in which he lived. Rubens excels only in the gross and sensual types of classical art; such, for instance, as Fauns, Satyrs, and Silenuses.

In his paintings of animals he always chose for his models the largest models of the brute creation; the horse, the bull, the tiger, and the lion were his favourite study, because he took a pleasure in watching the development of their muscular powers. In a word, Rubens was too material in all his

conceptions. His men and women have too much of the animal, and too little of the spiritual—too much of the earthly, and too little of the heavenly—in their composition. There is, in consequence, a tiring and disagreeable sameness in all his male and female figures. He had originally formed his ideas of beauty from the redundant forms of his own square-built countrywomen; and the study in foreign countries of all that was sublime, beautiful, and graceful in classical art, only modified, without eradicating, this vicious predilection. Animal life is everywhere the same; but the change of expression and the play of features, influenced by the fancy, are infinite in their variety. Even in Rubens's most holy conceptions we still recognise that fatal predominating influence of matter over mind, which so greatly weakens the effect of his sacred masterpieces. In his painting of the "Last Supper," the introduction of a dog under the table, picking a bone, is surely a violation of all harmony and propriety.

There is not, we think, in the whole *repertoire* of Rubens's paintings a single female figure in which the voluptuous development of the form is redeemed, or spiritualised, by the influence of mind. We do not recognise a face in the collection indicative of that heroic spirit which inspired a Joan of Arc, a Maid of Saragossa, or a Florence Nightingale. There is none of that tenderness, that devotedness, that enthusiasm, that self-sacrifice, which make of women ministering spirits, angels of comfort, heroines, and martyrs.

---

## FRANCOIS SNEYDERS.

---



It is a great mistake to confound the several schools of art of the Low Countries. Although topographically so closely united, the Flemish and Dutch *repertoires* are, in their characteristics, as wide as the poles asunder. Antwerp and Amsterdam, although only separated by a few leagues, and united at one time under one sovereign, have—in art—as little in common as England and Italy. The Flemings, following in the wake of Rubens, cover their square yards of canvas with large and life-like subjects; whereas the Dutch work patiently at small pieces, which they finish with great skill and precision. The Flemings aim at representing nature as she really is; while the Dutch endeavour to improve upon their originals by the refinement and polish of their decoration. And this difference, of which we will hereafter analyse the cause, is

perceptible in every branch of art, as much in the pieces where figures are the principal objects, as in landscapes, animals, and flower and fruit pieces. There is not the least affinity between the bold and striking landscapes of Van Artois, Wildens, or even Huysmans of Malines, and those groves or sandy shores so exquisitely finished by the

Dutch artists, Ruysdael and Wynants. In the same way, the hunting scenes of Philip Wouvermans, the animals of Karel Dujardin, the "still life" of David de Heem, and the fruit and flower pieces of Van Huysum, are not to be compared, because their merits are so very different in kind, with the panting hounds of François Sneyders, or with his beautiful fruit pieces and well supplied larders.

Had Rubens not been that universal genius we have represented him—had he not possessed the magic power of producing pictures in every style, which were all marvels of art in their way—but had he, instead of being that "admirable Crichton" of the schools of art, which he really was, devoted his undivided attention to the description of lions, boars, and dogs, tableaux of game, and cornucopias of fruit, Rubens—even the great Rubens!—himself would not have excelled in this style the inimitable Sneyders. It was, however, from the models of this prince of painters that Sneyders borrowed those characteristics of his art which are in him so vigorous and so captivating.

François Sneyders was born in the year 1579, and was, therefore, only two years younger than Rubens. He died at the age of seventy, in the year 1649, leaving behind him scarcely any materials for a biography, except what we can gather from the history of his paintings. He received his instructions in art from Peter Breughel, senior. While under Henry Van Balen, he made consider-



THE LICENSED DEALER IN GAME. FROM A PAINTING BY P. SNEYDERS.  
(Contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by the Duke of Newcastle.)

able progress ; and his introduction to Anthony Vandyck—a name to be hereafter immortalised—was owing to the circumstance of their being both pupils of Van Balen. Although Vandyck was much younger than Sneyders, the two artists early formed a mutual friendship for each other ; and, as soon as they were released from the trammels of pupilage, they both offered incense at the shrine of that great artist, who was beginning to shed so bright a lustre upon the Flemish school. They both cultivated their art, and derived vitality and vigour from the genius of Rubens.





THE DOAR HUNT. FROM A PAINTING BY F. SNEYDERS.  
(Contributed, from the French Collection, to the Art Treasures Exhibition, by Sir P. M. de Grey (London Hunt).)

With Sneyders especially this was the case. So imbued was he with the spirit of the prince of painters, that Rubens, while he watched the progress of Sneyders, declared that he could fancy the strokes were his, the colouring and style were so identical with his own.

## HIS PORTRAIT.

François Sneyders was, like most of the celebrated painters of his time, a tall and handsome man. His features were well chiselled, regular, and expressive; his forehead high and broad; his eyes large, full, and lustrous; his nose straight, and well formed; his upper lip covered with an abundant moustache, was glossy and black. His mouth—that most expressive of all the features of the face, and which is, whatever phrenologists may say to the contrary, the most certain diagnosis of the bent of the disposition—was beautifully carved; while his chin was round, well-shaped, and expressive of firmness and independence of character. There is a melancholy grandeur about the *tout ensemble* of the face, which both pleases and saddens the spectator. The interest we feel in gazing on this portrait of Sneyders is somewhat similar to that we experience in contemplating Vandyck's Charles I., whom the Flemish artist, in the regularity of his expressive features, somewhat resembles. The painting from which our engraving is copied must have been executed at a time when Sneyders was no longer young; whereas the portrait taken by his friend Vandyck represents the artist in the prime of manly vigour. There is, however, so great a similarity in the pose and the costume, that, were it not for the worn and haggard look of this oval likeness, we should think it had been copied from Vandyck's celebrated picture. In both likenesses the intellectual character of the face is beautifully preserved.

## "THE LICENSED DEALER IN GAME."

"Still life" was at first the forte of Sneyders. He delighted in grouping, upon a spacious dresser, a varied collection of dead game, for the sole enjoyment of gazing upon the beautiful colours which he produced so vividly and so naturally. He never reflected beforehand what he should represent; and, in this respect, he differed from nearly all the other painters of "still life," who study the grouping of their different subjects as attentively as an historical painter does the disposition of his living figures. Among the objects which would, under other circumstances, be only accessories, they choose one which becomes the principal feature of the piece. Upon this principal feature in the foreground they lavish all the resources of light and colour; while the others, according to the degree of importance which is attached to them, appear only in a kind of half light, or are lost imperceptibly in shade. In the kitchen scenes, for instance, of Kalf or Van Tol, there is a kind of method in the disposition of things of different degrees of importance—of shining cauldrons, or of utensils which are only introduced as accessories. Sneyders, on the contrary, when he paints "still life," studies only the softness or the brilliancy of the colouring, and aims but at describing, with truth and vigour, the actual appearance of his subject. His fruit, his dishes, his lifeless flesh or fowl, he has not introduced for the purpose of making them instrumental in the mere effect of his piece, but he has a practical end in view; or, in other words, he has aimed only at a faithful representation of the furred skin of a hare, hanging by its leg to a hook in the larder—of the bristling armour of a boar's back—or, as we see in the picture from which we have taken our engraving, of the sweeping and gorgeous plumage of the peacock. Little does he care whether or not the grouping of all the subjects which we see in our illustration will produce a harmonising whole—a well-digested *ensemble* of colours, which the eye can take in easily and at a glance. His chief object is to vindicate his reputation as a painter of the style; and, indeed, there is no more sure path to fame. "Still life" may be compared to a set of samples which a painter makes at his *début* in artistic life, with the view of consulting them hereafter for the innumerable shades of colouring he may require, and through the assistance of which he will gain, little by little, a knowledge of the harmony of tone, breadth, and handling. In the same way a writer draws upon the dictionary of his memory for all those words of which he must first know the precise meaning before he can make them available in his language. The study of "still life" is, as it were, the grammar of the painter. He first learns to speak correctly the language of art, and then uses this preliminary knowledge as the basis of his future eloquence.

In "The Licensed Dealer in Game," there is a richness, a profusion, a prodigality of labour, which we do not recollect to have seen equalled in any other painting of "still life." The superabundance of flesh and fowl collected on one dresser almost palls upon the fancy, although the oppressive effect is somewhat relieved by the introduction of the dealer and of his dogs, whose training undergoes a severe ordeal in the presence of so many fragrant and attractive dainties.

Rubens, who could mistake Sneyders's touches for his own, found in the painter of "still life" a most useful and efficient assistant in the working up of his pictures. Vandyck was his great coadjutor in figure-painting, Wildens and Lucas Van Uden in his landscapes. He was, however, always ready and willing himself to repay the services of his three pupils; and, in the case of Sneyders, he often adorned with human figures the great "still life" pictures of the painter of animals. Unfortunately, however, for Sneyders, the figures which Rubens intended as accessories became the prominent features of the piece. In some of the paintings which were the joint production of Rubens and Sneyders, it is curious to observe how these two great masters, equally famous in their way, seem to vie with each other as to the effect they will produce upon the spectator; and the harmony of the picture is sometimes sacrificed to this unintentional rivalry. There is a *chef-d'œuvre* among the collection at La Haye, in which Rubens has introduced a curious looking figure, dressed in a garb which indicates at once the hunter and the monk. Over his cassock he carries a hunting horn, fastened to his waistband, and he is in the act of hanging a doe to a hook in the wall. He is evidently the prior of some order, who has had his likeness taken in this dress to show how greatly his skill as a sportsman contributed to the support of the fraternity to which he belonged. Partridges, snipes, moor fowl, hares, boar's head, melons, grapes, artichokes, asparagus, and all things, indeed, that the epicure could desire, are grouped together on this canvas. Every part of the picture is characterised by a peculiar touch of the brush. The downy softness of the partridge, the fur of the hare, the rough and ridgy surface of the melon, with its succession of green and golden tints, the inviting ripeness of the grapes, are represented with such a beautiful, delicate, and transparent shade, that they delight the eye of the connoisseur while they make his mouth water.

It is not always a first or a second work, however excellent, that secures to its author fame or profit. The same may be said of artists and their *chefs-d'œuvre*. There is a luck in these matters, or at any rate that happy inspiration which men irreverently call "luck."

Sneyders had painted pictures of rare merit; he had had the great honour of working with Rubens, as his "mate," or "colleague;" but his first great hit was a painting representing "A Stag Hunt."

This picture made Sneyders's fortune, or, at any rate, put him in the way of making it.

It has been justly said there is no royal road to learning; but there certainly is a royal road to success for painters, and Sneyders found it, when his "Stag Hunt" attracted the attention and secured the patronage of Philip III., King of Spain.

Philip commissioned Sneyders to paint a number of battle and hunting pieces. The Archduke Albert followed the example of the King of Spain, and when from governor of the Low Countries he became monarch of that fertile country (so rich in the fruits of the earth, and in that gift of Heaven—genius), he named Sneyders his painter in ordinary. With Sneyders's battle scenes we are not well acquainted, but we are enthusiastic admirers of his hunting pieces.

There is about them a fire, a reality, an energy, perfectly irresistible. For glow of feeling and impetuous power, they approach Rubens. They are, in fact, battle pieces—deadly combats—of beings whose arms are all supplied by "Nature's crowning hand." And how much more savage and terrible are those engagements where brutal passion has no weapon but its own fangs, or claws, its own gripe, or deadly hug. Even among men what weapon is more fatal than a bruiser's clenched fist. And how much more horrible is a fatal boxing match than a "*duel à la mort*." Of the bloody battles which Sneyders delighted to paint, brutes were the heroes; but for glowing life and passionate power those brutes rival the men and women of Rubens. Their eye-balls glare, sparkle, and glower; their nostrils expand; they foam at the mouth; their jaws, yawning wide, stream with blood: and when Sneyders represents the rush of a pack of maddened hounds on a boar at bay, as in the picture now before us, tearing his grisly sides, biting his tough ears, many of them during the process gored, ripped open, and expiring on the ground, the spectator gazing on this vivid picture fancies he hears their bark, their shrill sharp cries of pain or joy, the savage grunt of the boar, and even the blast of the horn.

#### "BOAR HUNT."

There is a wonderful depth of expression in the powerful, ferocious, grisly hero of this famous piece. The odds against the porcine king of the forests of Germany are frightful; and the painter has wisely chosen that moment of intense and exciting interest in any conflict, any battle of men or beasts, any drama of life or death, when the *dénouement* is, though near at hand, as yet uncertain.

A great writer has said that it is not in human nature to look on at any conflict for five minutes without taking one side or the other. The reality of this boar hunt is tested and proved by the fact, that all who look at it are warmly on the side of the boar. The expression of his life-like, fiery eye is almost harrowing in its intense agony of endurance. The dogs seem like a rabble let loose upon a hero. The grouping of these dogs, their muscular development, their canine, crafty ferocity of expression, their admirable contrast to the long-tusked warrior they are attacking at odds, so revolting to

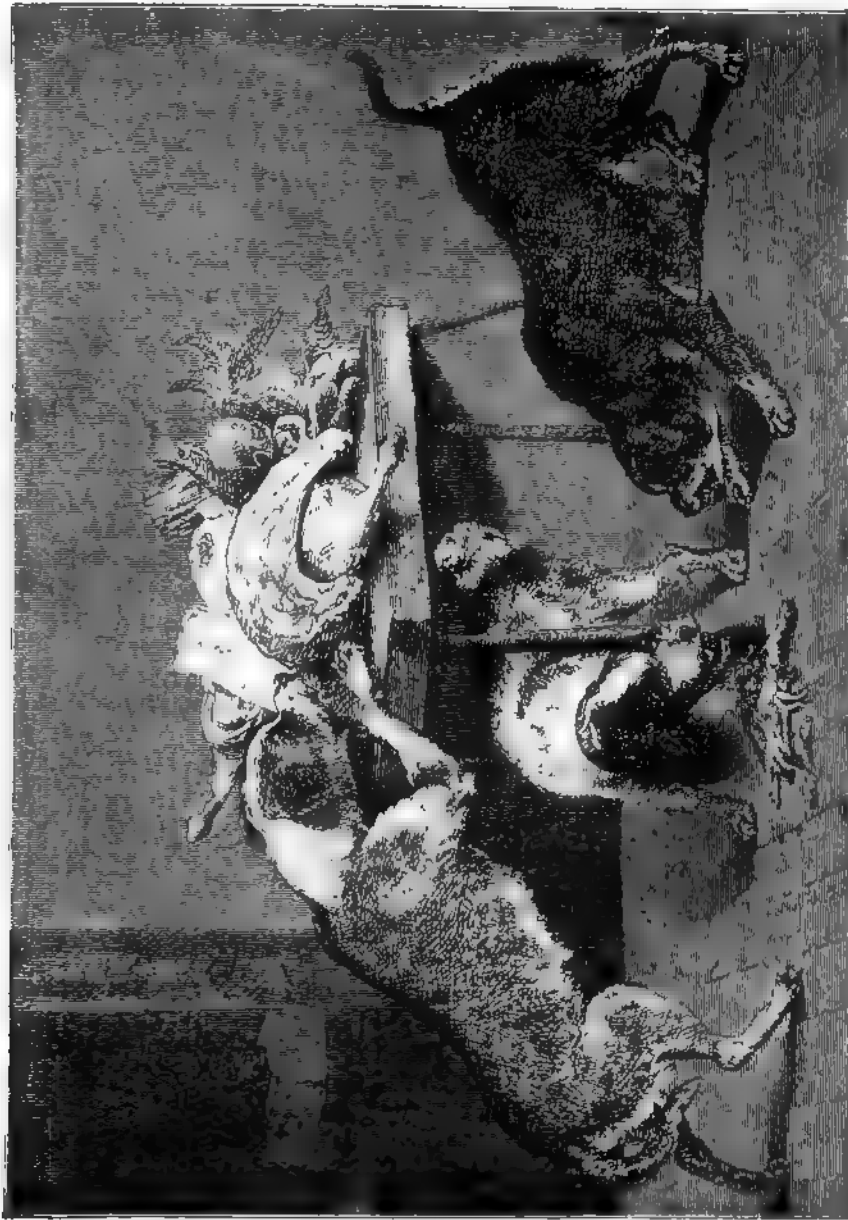


FIGHT BETWEEN DOGS AND BEAR. FROM A PAINTING BY P. SNEYDERS.

English justice—the very ground on which they lie, and the tree that marks the spot of many a death-gasp, all unite to make this picture Sneyders's masterpiece. The brave boar may fall, but if he does, like Peggy Lobkins's relatives, he will die *game*, in every sense of the word.

Sneyders has this advantage over the Dutch painters of animal life, that his successes were achieved in spite of the difficulties that always attend the representation of scenes of tempestuous and conflicting

passions. Wouvermans delighted in admirable pictures of preparations for hunting. A lordly castle, graceful ladies mounting their steeds and bowing to the compliments of their knights and squires: how easy such a scene compared to the fiery conflict depicted in "The Boar Hunt."



DOGS IN A LARDE. FROM A PAINTING BY F. SNEYDER.

**"FIGHT BETWEEN BEARS AND DOGS."**

No other painter of animals—not even our own immortal Landseer—has succeeded in investing with so much grandeur, we might almost say sublimity, the contest between dogs and bears, or boars. In the celebrated masterpiece, of which we have here given an illustration, the internecine struggle between the dogs and bears is represented with lifelike effect. The shaggy monster who, erect on his hind legs, folds in his deadly embrace the crushed hound, is baited on all sides by the yelping pack.

One tears at his ear, another attacks his flank, a third gnaws the muscles of his powerful limb ; while others, unable as yet to join in the bloody strife, are aiding with their tongue the teeth of their *confrères*. The huge monster of the wood still holds his own, notwithstanding the number of his dauntless assailants, many of whom, gasping and mangled around him, bear evidence to the prowess of their mighty foe. If, at length, overcome by numbers, he falls a victim to the vengeance of the rabble, his defeat will not have been inglorious ; and, had his maimed and bleeding foes the faculty of language, they might exclaim with Pyrrhus, "one more such victory, and we are undone!" In another part of the well-fought field, another bear is baited by another pack ; and here the contest is equally close and uncertain. The claws, as well as the teeth, of infuriated Bruin have made deadly ravages among the hounds, whose cries of agony are drowned by the growling thunder of their terrific opponent. The pertinacity of the dogs, notwithstanding the slaughter in their ranks, is admirably described by the inspired painter ; and the ferocious expression of baffled rage in their faces, as they tug and strain at the almost impervious hide of the bear, shows how long and studiously the artist must have watched the progress of similar engagements. There is a terrible reality about the whole piece ; and we scarcely know which most to admire, the demoniacal fierceness of the savage bear's fiery eye, as he hugs his victim, or the anguish of the expiring hound. There is no sameness in the faces of the dogs ; their expressions are as varied as their attitudes ; and we cannot too highly appreciate the wonderful fertility of conception which could suggest so interesting a variety in so many dogs of the same race. To have been present at the scenes which Sneyders has represented so faithfully—lions darting on their prey, boars infuriated by the hounds, stags at bay, or baited bears—implies a degree of personal risk which few painters would care to encounter. And yet it is difficult to understand how, without having actually assisted at these savage scenes, the painter could have described them with so much attention to the minutæ of the *tableau*.

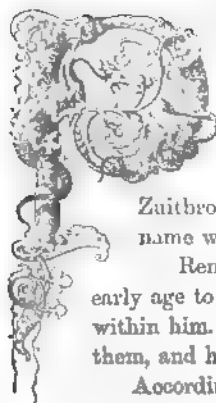
#### "DOGS IN A LARDER."

When Sir Joshua Reynolds examined the paintings collected in the Museums of the Netherlands, he took, we are told, but little notice of Sneyders's *chefs-d'œuvre*. "The works of this master," said he, "are, from their subject matter, their size, and, we might add, their number, better suited for the walls of an anteroom than the picture-gallery of a palace." The President of the Royal Academy, furthermore, says : "We have here pictures of game, of bear, boar, and stag hunts by Sneyders, de Vos, Tyt, and Weenix. The best in this style are by Weenix."

Sneyders's hunting scenes, and even his still life pieces, cover, indeed, for the most part so large a surface of canvas, that they are better fitted for the panelings formerly used in large dining halls than for picture-frames. We have by degrees so contracted the size of our dwellings that we can no longer find space for the magnificent masterpieces of Sneyders, or for such productions as "The Battles of Alexander the Great," by Charles le Brun. Even Gobelin tapestry is completely out of place, save in the palaces of our wealthy aristocracy. The painting of "Dogs in a Larder" does not, however, labour under this disadvantage, if it is not almost a sacrilege to use such a term as "disadvantage" in reference to the size of the inimitable works of the great Flemish painter of animals. Many of these priceless treasures of art are, nevertheless, for want of a place sufficiently large to display them in, consigned in neglected rolls to the recesses of garrets and out-houses, where they are worm-eaten and are rotting to pieces. The moderate size of "Dogs in a Larder" has preserved it from this ignominious fate. There is a wonderful reality about the picture : the dogs, who have penetrated into this well-supplied larder, can scarcely realise to themselves their good fortune ; but two of them, like the curs that they really are, instead of seizing each on his part of the abundance which would furnish enough and to spare for a whole pack, are quarrelling over a half-picked bone. The third, more sensible, if not more honest, profiting by the carelessness which has left so inviting a banquet within his reach, "takes the goods the gods provide him." With glaring eyes and crouching form, poor puss, who dares not for her life venture within the range of such keen-scented opponents, is watching from a distance the rapid plunder of the larder in which her own minor depredations have often passed undetected. The whole scene is highly characteristic of the style of this master, and would repay the attentive study of the student in the art of animal painting.

With reference to that superiority which Sir Joshua affected to find in the paintings of Weenix, we can only say that we have been unable to discover it. An amateur who judges the merit of a painter by the fineness of touch or the finish of the parts, might see much to admire in the elaborate productions of Weenix; but that an artist so celebrated as the President of the Royal Academy should have so lightly esteemed the bold and effective touches of Sneyders, is quite incomprehensible. A comparison between the pieces of Weenix and François Sneyders is, moreover, ridiculous. Both these artists have painted admirably to the purpose, each having regard to the space he intended to occupy. But, without attempting to justify the criticism of Sir Joshua, we cannot help regretting that Sneyders had so little confidence in his own powers, even as a painter in that style in which he has immortalised himself. It has been objected against him, and unfortunately with truth, that he never trusted himself to paint horses, but always had recourse to the assistance of Rubens, who was, in his opinion, the only artist capable of representing the noble grace and beauty of that animal whose "neck is clothed with thunder." But a still greater shortcoming than this want of confidence in himself was the ignorance which Sneyders has shown of *chiaro-oscuro*. This greatly mars the effect of many of his best pictures. He not only neglected all attempt at harmony in the grouping of his subjects, but he paid no attention to light and shade, or, in other words, he never took especial care to introduce into his picture a light to which all other lights should be, as it were, subordinate. There is a certain "Boar Hunt" by Sneyders in which the fierce object of the pursuit forms a dark mass in the centre of the picture, by no means sufficiently distinct to give any definite idea of what it represents, while near the frame are strong lights scattered here and there contrary to all the laws of light and shade, both natural and acquired. With these trifling drawbacks Sneyders was a painter of the first rank. In everything he undertook he succeeded in the most marvellous manner; and, luckily for his reputation, he never undertook anything beyond the sphere of his own peculiar style, or the resources of his genius. He knew how to impart to inanimate objects, not exactly that illusion which delights the inexperienced or vulgar mind, but that secret charm which arises from the nature of the objects invested by the painter with a spiritual reality, and which, therefore, always awaken in the mind of the spectator a corresponding sensation. In his paintings of those animals which are more particularly the objects of the hunter's pursuit he is without a rival. To bears, boars, and stags he has given the action, the fire, the breath of life.

## PAUL REMBRANDT.



PAUL REMBRANDT, whose honoured name conjures up such bright and concentrated lights, and such mysterious depths of dark, transparent shadows—Paul Rembrandt was the son of a miller, named Herman Gerretsz, and surnamed Van Ryn, because his mill was situated on the banks of an arm of the Rhine. He was born, not, as Houbraken states, near Leyden, but in that city, on the ramparts, near the *Wittepoort*, or White Gate. His mother, Cornelia Von Zuythbroeck, gave birth to him on the 15th of June, 1606, and at the font he received that name which his genius rendered so illustrious, the name of Rembrandt.

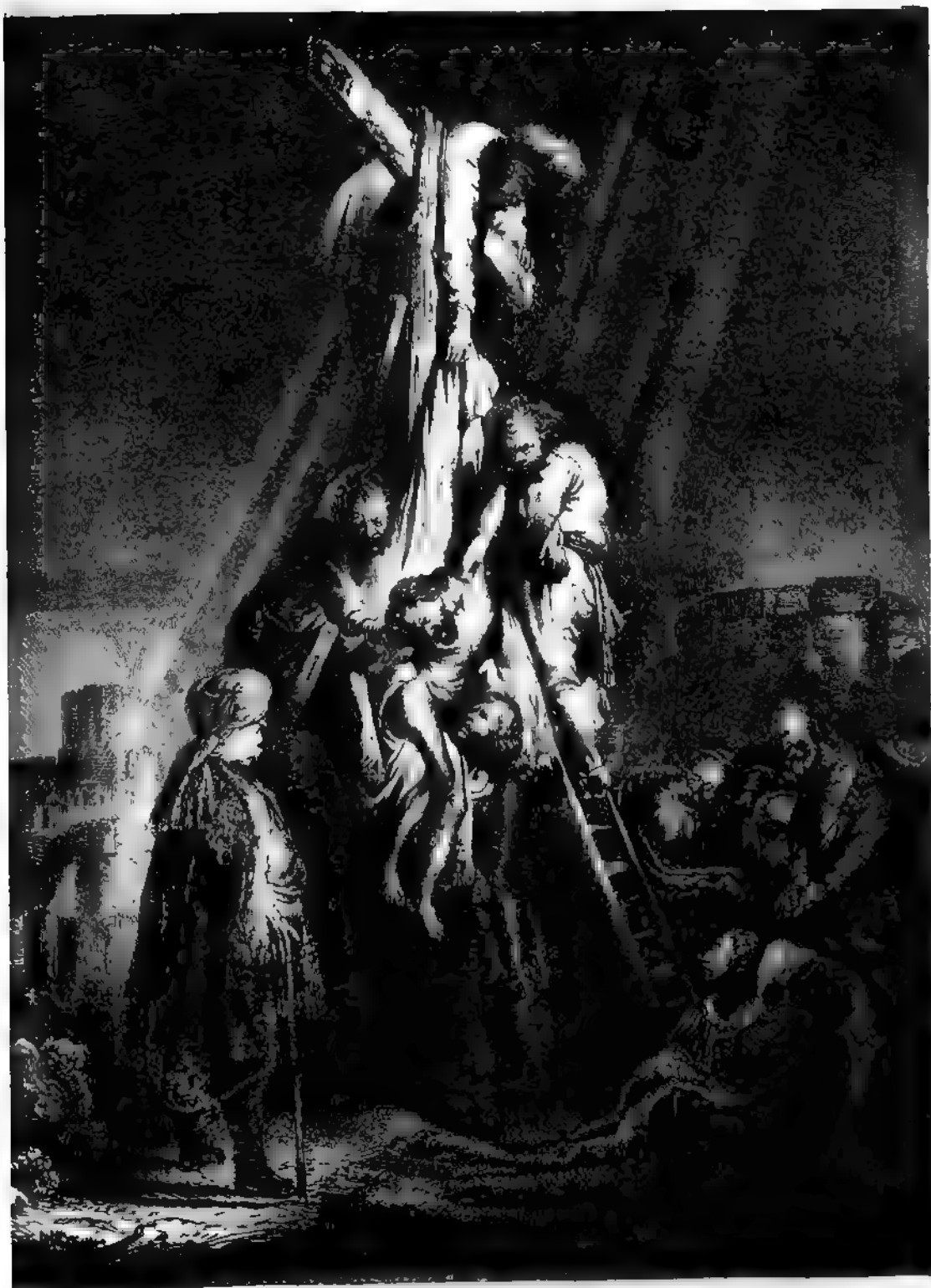
Rembrandt, who was destined to pursue literature as a profession, was sent at a very early age to the University of Leyden; but the spirit, or rather the genius of painting, stirred within him. The Latin authors charmed him much less than the engravings that illustrated them, and he soon abandoned Suetonius for the *chiaro-oscuro*.

According to his contemporary, Sandrart, Paul Rembrandt's first master was Van Swanenburg. But Houbraken says his first lessons were imparted by Pierre Lastman, an artist of high repute at Amsterdam, and that at the end of six months he left Lastman to study his great art under the direction of Jacques Pinas.



HYPERAEM BOWEN (WHITE KING.) FROM AN ENGRAVING BY REMBRANDT.  
(Contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by R. E. Holford, Esq.)





THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS. FROM A PAINTING BY REMBRANDT.  
(Of which an Engraving is in the Art Treasures Exhibition.)

This seems the more probable, because we can trace something of the manner of Pinas and Lastman, even in the *chefs-d'œuvre* of their illustrious pupil. However original genius may be, its development will always be found to have some affinity (if we can but trace it, obscure and complicated as it often is) with early impressions.

Even in Correggio there is a germ of Rembrandt; and we can discover, as we follow it out, the influence of Elzheimer and Lastman. No wonder that the Dutch painters try to appropriate a pupil who, on leaving their studios, was fit not only to be their master, but was the great master of his art. And thus Van Leuwen, in his history of Leyden, assigns to a fourth artist the honour of teaching Rembrandt—namely, to George Schooten.

Rembrandt has left to posterity a number of portraits of himself, from ruddy youth to pallid age. There was nothing of the lordly beauty of Rubens in the head and face of this great Dutch genius, but there was great brilliancy of colouring; all the fire of his wild fervid imagination in his deep-set eyes, and a delicacy of beauty and sentiment in his well-curved, finely-shaped mouth.

His hair, of a bright light auburn, of reddish hue, imparted that brilliancy and importance to his head which the ancients so well appreciated, when they gave to their gods and goddesses the *auricoma*, or *flavicoma*, which lends to beauty a sort of halo as dazzling as it is rare. This abundance of bright hair gave a charm and dignity to a face in which the high cheek bones and large flat nose were the most remarkable traits.

We shall return to the "outward man" of Paul Rembrandt, when we give our readers one of his many portraits; but first let us here consider one of the greatest masterpieces of his genius, and, indeed, of high art in general—Rembrandt's "Descent from the Cross."

#### "DESCENT FROM THE CROSS."

The tragedy of Mount Calvary has ever been a favourite subject with great painters. From Daniel De Volterre to Rubens, how many have chosen the moment when the body of the Redeemer is taken down from the cross! How differently does Rembrandt treat this sublime subject from all who preceded or succeeded him! Rembrandt was a great poet—a Milton; whose pencil, not his pen, expressed what his wild, ardent fancy conceived.

Rembrandt's "Descent from the Cross" is not merely fine, it is sublime; and yet it is difficult, at first, to explain in what consists that sublimity which every one recognises at a glance. The unities are violated; old traditions (so potent with the human mind) are set at naught; the style is open to severe criticism; the *costume* is out of all character. In all these important points the picture is not to be approved. Instead of that noble and touching beauty of expression, of feature and of form, with which we love to invest the incarnate Deity, and with which most painters endeavour to adorn that sinless One who was at once "a Son of God" and a "Man of Sorrows," Rembrandt has not only given no beauty or dignity to the face or form of the crucified Redeemer, but, on the contrary, has made him singularly devoid of both!

The men who have unnailed those blessed feet and hands, those who hold the winding-sheet, the spectators of the scene, and even "the three Marys," belong, judging from their mean and squalid attire, to the lowest and most miserable class. A sort of burgomaster, with a turbaned head and furred pelisse, looks on in stolid indifference. He leans on a stick, and certainly his boots and trowsers are singularly out of keeping with the time and place. But for them he might have passed for some delegate of "the law," sent to assist at the removal of the corpse.

So far we have a new and singular conception—some masterly grouping, and considerable intensity and fervour of expression; but the inspiration of the picture consists in that wondrous stream, or torrent, or flood of light from on high, which—like rays from the eye of the Almighty—falls on the body of the victim! All around is indistinct—dark, dreary, and desolate are both the landscape and the foreground. A shower of rays pierces the deep darkness of the scene; and while Jerusalem is overshadowed by a dense gloom, a bright glory settles on and illumines the pale image of death!

How original, how sublime an inspiration was this! Touched by this celestial light, or shrouded by this mysterious gloom, the ragged attendants have nothing mean or sordid in their misery. Their earnest gestures, their delicate and passionate devotion, their tender care of their dear Lord's remains, their deep, deep grief—these alone dwell on the memory of the heart. Faces and forms ennobled by

faith, softened by sorrow, and touched by heavenly love, have a beauty and a power which no rags or wretchedness can impair. And how palpable is the sorrow, how evident the love, how entire the devotion of these true sheep of the great, the heavenly Shepherd! What a contrast between the impassive stolidity of the turbaned spectator and the love of these poor followers of a crucified Lord! How well has the great Rembrandt proved his theory—so earnestly maintained in all his works—that nobility, true nobility, consists less in outward forms than in the *sentiment* that animates them.

The first Christians weeping over their crucified Saviour were independent of the antique or pagan beauty requisite for a merely classic subject. "The Descent from the Cross" required the beauty of soul, not body; the spirit, not the form. Rembrandt bathed it in light from on high. Who would not dwell with awe upon a scene upon which heaven itself seems to gaze in that flood of light?

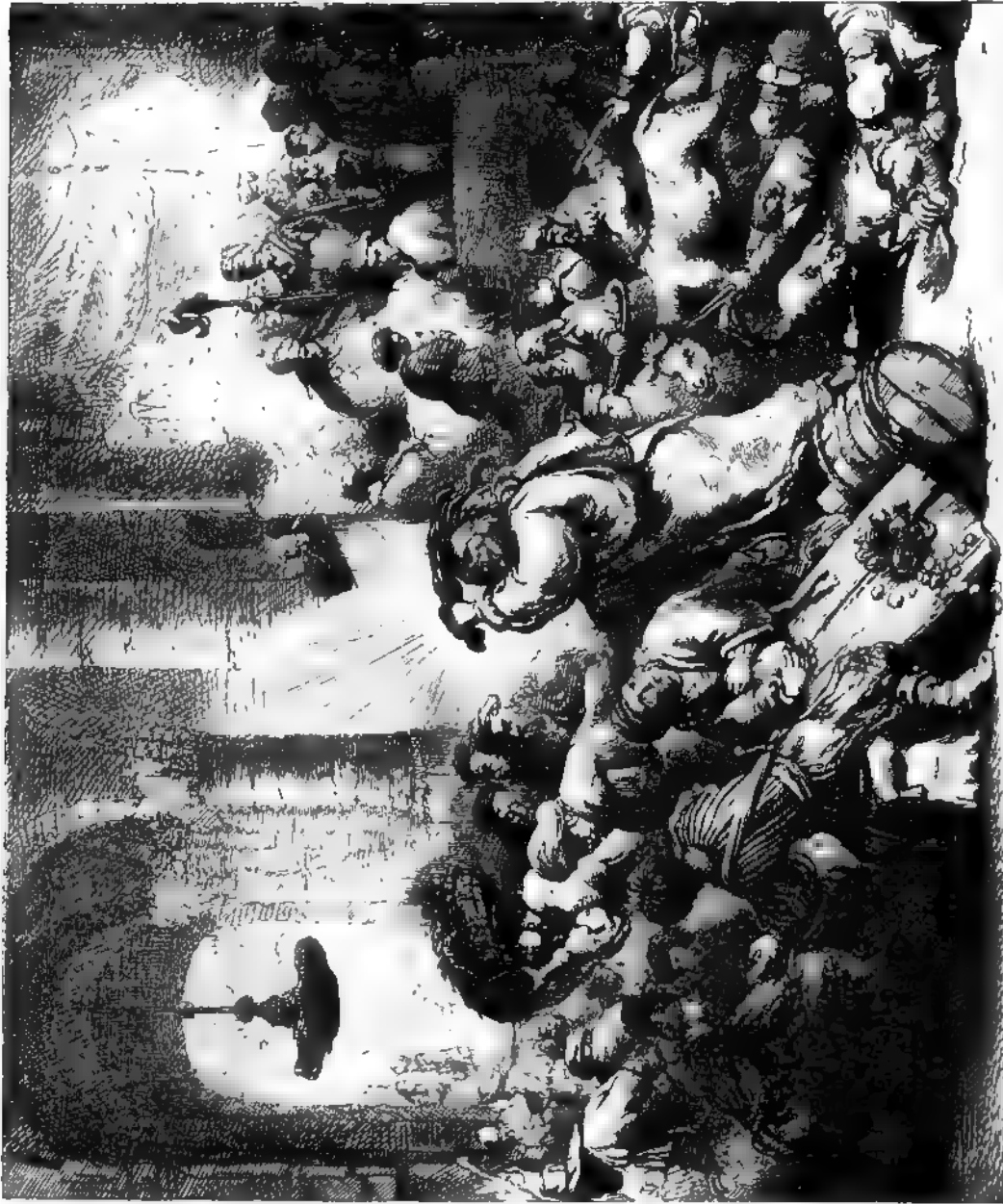
This picture is eminently suggestive, after examining it with attention; and no one can withdraw his attention from a subject so arresting, treated in a manner so inspiring, the mind travels onward from the foot of the cross, and ere long is peopled with phantoms; and, after following the Saviour to the cave of Joseph of Arimathæa, is, betimes, at the sepulchre with the holy women, and present at the resurrection and ascension of our Lord.

Rembrandt, who was not merely eminent as a painter, but as an engraver also, has entered into every minute detail of the scenes that succeeded the crucifixion, in a series of engravings, each a poem in sublimity of conception and delicacy of execution. And when we remember that this sublime genius, whom nothing escapes (realising, in his knowledge of everything vast and minute, the *beau-ideal* of a poet described in "Rasselas"), was the son of a common miller on the banks of the Rhine, and looked on the flat country and its phlegmatic inhabitants first through the window of that mill which his genius has immortalised, we are compelled to acknowledge that there is a genius which seems to come direct from on high; that it belongs to no time, nor place, nor class of men. Education may improve, but cannot create it. It makes a man a king among men; and "a divinity does hedge" such kings—those monarchs of the mind. They have "a divine right," and all nations recognise it. Of such a painter as Rembrandt, it may be said, as truly as of any poet, "*nascitur, non fit.*"

Fortunately for Rembrandt, though born and bred in a mill, his native land was one in which art was honoured and remunerated, and painters held in the highest estimation. The Dutch were then, as they are still, a quiet, reflective, phlegmatic race—men of thought, rather than of action; deep, rather than brilliant; fond of humour, though not humorous, as "lazy dulness ever loves its joke;" and ardent admirers of the wildest flights of imagination, although apparently a nation of matter-of-factors!

Rembrandt has been accused of weakness in design; and, we must own, that his drawing bears no touch of the elegance—has none of the refinement of the classic school. Having never studied the faultless proportions of ancient statuary, he was little acquainted with graceful forms. His Bathshebas are mere Dutch *vroons*, who must have fascinated the King of Israel by their fleshy forms and florid complexions, rather than by their graceful symmetry. His chaste Susannahs are stout *soubrettes*, requiring all the illusion of half lights and fantastic shade to conjure up any idea of the beautiful. But let us be just in our criticism. Rembrandt's figures possess, in an eminent degree, the essential qualities of distinctness and of correct perspective. In this respect, we cannot mention a painter who equals him. The expression, resulting from the attitude of the figures, is remarkably natural and affecting in all his works. Where can we find amazement better depicted than in "The Resurrection of Lazarus?" What a variety of emotions! What different effects, according to the different characters! Joy, tenderness, incredulity, and terror, modify, in successive gradations, the astonishment of the spectators, who advance, retire, or remain petrified, when, at the bidding of Christ, Lazarus bursts the cerements of the tomb. Poussin could hardly produce finer effect. In "The Prodigal Son," what artist ever gave greater reality to paternal forgiveness, and to filial remorse? In this picture there may be inaccuracy, doubt, and disorder; nevertheless, we see portrayed in it the deepest feelings of the human heart. The Virgin bending over her first-born, and pressing him to her bosom with so sublime, and yet so maternal a tenderness, reminds us, in this great masterpiece of Rembrandt, of the divine inspiration of Raphael in similar subjects. With regard to our artist's architecture, it is as original and poetical as his figure painting. His edifices seem destined for the abode of gnomes and fairies. It is evident that his grotesque forms could not, with propriety, have inhabited classical

structures. His steel-clad warriors, his rabbis, with their long beards, require mysterious dwellings, with trap-doors and winding staircases. As we recognise with pleasure the classic profile in the streets of Rome or Venice, and study the analogy that a regular face has to the exact proportions of Roman architecture, so are we delighted to behold Rembrandt's conceptions in their ideal abodes. Anti-



JESUS CLEARING THE TEMPLE. FROM A PAINTING BY REMBRANDT.

quarians, quacks, magicians, gipsies—all this motley but picturesque population are to be met with in those temples, where the characteristic "*darkness visible*" of our artist produces the illusion of immense space. What an imagination! What a mind! In gazing on some of his pictures, the scenes of the "Arabian Nights" seem realised on canvas.

Some connoisseurs have stated that Rembrandt visited Venice, but we find no authority for this conjecture. Besides, a knowledge of the galleries of the City of the Adriatic could never have furnished our painter with the grotesque variety, the poetic richness of his interiors; he was initiated in his youth into the great secret of striking and original effects—the proper management of light and shade,

THE NIGHT WATCH, FROM A PAINTING BY REMBRANDT.



and of that partial darkness which he uses to give effect to his light. Despairing of imitating the sun, he closes his door upon it, covers up his windows, and only allows one ray of the great luminary to enter through a crevice. But when he has imprisoned this ray he makes good use of it. This ray illumines the bald head of the hermit at his devotions, or darts through the shade on the form of a lovely woman reposing on a couch, and in this woman we recognise "Potiphar's Wife."

Through Rembrandt's pencil the miracles of Our Saviour are translated upon canvas, by the effects of light. His imagination represents the scene as pictured in a dark cavern suddenly illumined. With him light is life, and darkness death. Sometimes he conjures up a silence almost *perceptible*, if we may be allowed the contradiction in terms; then a gradual harmony of colouring produces on the eye the effect that silence has on the ear. In illustration of this remark, we take the piece of the "Two Philosophers." A ray struggling through the window pane enters the quiet dwelling of the recluse. Books are open before him, but he reads them not—he is meditating. The light traverses the wall, and dimly discloses the steps of a winding staircase. After studying the picture for a few minutes, we discover on the staircase the forms of two women. Of these figures the colour is so similar to that of the masses of shade, that (if we might use the metaphor) we should say they make no noise—they utter not a sound to break the silence of the picture.

Sometimes by bursts of daylight the painter gives vent to his inspiration. Where his thoughts centre, he collects the rays, and fascinates the eyes of the spectator. Enter that humble abode. It is a carpenter's house. There we may contemplate a young woman holding her son in her arms. The grandfather is gazing on the boy. Near the window, through which a dark, gray sky is visible, the carpenter planes a board. In the meantime a ray pierces the clouds; it glides through an imperceptible opening; it illumines, it gilds the form of the child. The face of the young mother beams with joy: the grandfather's countenance is radiant. . . . Wonder of wonders! We are in the house of Mary! That mother is the Virgin—her child is the Christ!

In subjects taken from the Old Testament, Rembrandt is not less successful. Witness the "Vision of Ezekiel." It passes through many fantastic gradations. Above shines glory, in which the Almighty appears surrounded by angels; below are the four beasts spoken of by the prophet. The picture is small, but it comprises two worlds—a hell below and a heaven above—the brightness of Paradise and the darkness of Pandemonium. Who would exchange the beauties of the antique for such scenes as these? The merits of other painters would be faults in Rembrandt.

#### "EPHRAIM BONUS," SECOND STATE (WHITE RING).

We have much pleasure in presenting our subscribers with this beautiful engraving from a very rare print by Rembrandt, of which the best impression was displayed in the Art Treasures Palace, at Manchester, contributed by R. S. Holford, Esq. Our copy is engraved from the original by Linton, and is a faithful *fac-simile* of one of the great master's best productions in copper. Rembrandt has bequeathed to us many specimens of his skill in etching. "Ephraim Bonus," first state (black ring), and "Ephraim Bonus," second state (white ring), are among the number. Of the subject of the portrait we only know that he was a Dutch physician of eminence in the seventeenth century. He owes his immortality, however, not to his physiological fame, but to the genius of the painter among whose works the two likenesses are found. "Ephraim Bonus" (black ring), after Rembrandt's death, was sold for 3,700 francs, or £148; whereas the white ring was prized by the same valuer at only 450 francs, or £18. So much, however, has time added to the worth of these two engravings, that, at the present date, it would be impossible to estimate sufficiently high the value of these engravings.

#### "JESUS CLEARING THE TEMPLE."

The Clearing the Temple has been as popular a subject with the masters of the "grand style" as any event in the ministry of Christ; but no painter of ancient or modern times has given so life-like a representation of the miraculous scene as Rembrandt. This great picture is most elaborate in its composition. The numbers of figures introduced—the supernatural terror with which the presence of the "Son of Man" has inspired the desecrators of the holy edifice—the light that illumines the strange crowd, partly emanating in rays of glory from the head of Christ, and partly from those undefined sources which our painter was so fond of calling into requisition in all his pictures—give a very peculiar character to the whole *tableau*. Altogether, the scene is an admirable illustration of that passage in the Gospel of St. Matthew, "And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves."

When Rembrandt had once established his reputation by that originality of style which every connoisseur acknowledged his works displayed, he opened a school of painting, which he divided into several compartments, allotting to each pupil a separate studio. His object in this arrangement was to obviate the possibility of his pupils imitating one another's style, which they would, in all probability, have done, had they worked together in one common *atelier*; whereas by making each study by himself the living model, he hoped to preserve in all some originality and distinctness.

The system worked most successfully; and many famous painters, who were fellow-pupils under Rembrandt, achieved fame and fortune in styles quite distinct, but yet preserving, in their freshness and peculiarity, the stamp of the genius of their master. Among the most celebrated of these pupils were Ferdinand Bol, Fictoor, Gerard Douw, Van Hoogstraten, and Flinsck.

Rembrandt himself, the president of this monastic school of artists, was a man of peculiar manners—a visionary, self-concentrated, reserved, original, contradictory, and inscrutable. He had collected, in a large reservoir of curiosities, turbans, scarves of various textures and colours, pieces of ancient armour, rusty swords, halberds, and other mediæval weapons. He was proud of displaying before his visitors these various articles of *vertù*, and of boasting, "These are my antique treasures." He was an indefatigable collector of engravings from Raphael's paintings, and was, moreover, possessed of a vast number of beautiful Italian impressions; but, unlike many of his *confrères*, who feigned to under-rate the sources from which they borrowed everything of value they possessed, Rembrandt approved of all he saw, without imitating anything. Antiquarian, as well as painter, he attended every sale of articles of *vertù*, and paid liberally for objects of curiosity, for drawings, paintings, ancient weapons, coins, and costumes. In this way he spent, in an incredibly short time, not only the large sums that he received for his own productions, but even the rich dowry brought him by Saskia Uylenburg, the great heiress, native of Leuwaarden, the capital of Friesland, whom he had espoused in 1634. By her he had a son, of the name of Titus, whom he survived.

Rembrandt has been often taxed with avarice. Many anecdotes, more or less plausible, have been invented, with the view of proving that this great painter was a miser. But the autograph letters of the artist himself, and his many acts of generosity are a sufficient refutation of the charge which Houbraeken originated on insufficient grounds, and which envious rivals have ridiculously exaggerated. After perusing these letters, and with the evidence before us of so many acts of liberality, it is impossible to believe that Rembrandt had any of the characteristics of a Harpagon or a Daniel Dance. That he was of a most grateful disposition is evident from the number of likenesses he executed, both on canvas and in copper, of his friends and benefactors, for it is the fashion with artists to show the sense they entertain of favours received by multiplying the likenesses of those who have conferred them. When he first began life as a painter, he had a powerful patron in a certain Dr. Tulp, professor of anatomy at Amsterdam, and brother-in-law to the famous Bourgonmaster Six. This Dr. Tulp he has immortalised by a masterpiece, which represents the professor in the midst of his pupils, and which is well known to picture-fanciers under the title of the "Lecturer in Anatomy." This *chef-d'œuvre* is in the Museum of La Haye; but great as are its merits, it is not seen to advantage by those who have first feasted their eyes on that far more striking production of Rembrandt's genius in the Museum of Amsterdam, entitled

#### "THE NIGHT-WATCH."

The first glimpse of this great picture is an epoch in the life of a connoisseur in painting. Not only are the eyes of the spectator dazzled by the mysterious light of so extraordinary a piece, not only are they bewildered with astonishment at the life-like reality of the numerous figures so strangely grouped together, but his mind is transported into a new region, which is neither the material world nor the realm of fancy, but a kind of debatable ground, in which the real and the imaginary seem to struggle for the mastery. The doubtful nature of the subject matter of this piece, and the cloud of uncertainty which still veils the meaning of the painter, do but add the charm of mystery to the unrivalled beauty of the *chef-d'œuvre*. The heroes whom Rembrandt places in the foreground are only burly burgomasters, mustached musketeers, soldiers, and drummer boys; but their march is so irregular, and their features so puzzling, that it is impossible to say whether they are setting out for the



THE RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS. FROM A PAINTING BY REMBRANDT.

*Of which there is an Engraving in the Art Treasures Exhibition, contributed by the Duke of Buccleuch.*

war, or are only going their nightly round; whether they are starting for a shooting match, or are returning from the sport; whether they are going to contend with one another for the prize, or whether they have already rewarded the successful candidate. The whole picture seems nothing more





PORTRAIT OF AN OLD MAN. FROM A PAINTING BY REMBRANDT.

nor less than a vision, and it would puzzle the most ingenious of Rembrandt's admirers to tell whence comes the light which falls upon the figures. It is neither sunlight, moonlight, nor torchlight,—it is simply the light of Rembrandt's genius. The figures which at first sight seem copied from nature, on

a closer inspection resolve themselves into a kind of phantasmagoria. We should almost fancy that Rembrandt had, in his dreams, seen a band of warriors passing before his eyes, whose figures were sometimes strongly, sometimes only vaguely impressed upon his mind. Just "like the baseless fabric of a dream," some are thrust into the background of the canvas, some are already beyond its limits. In the foreground of the picture are two armed warriors in large felt hats, of whom the one is marching in the shade, and the other advances in the light. In the shadowy rout which follows, and which presses on their heels, the *chiaro-oscuro* is so managed that we can distinguish the attitude, and even the colour, of a dog barking at the drummer boy. Many men, variously attired, whose faces come into relief out of dark shadows, are descending the staircase of a palace.

One of these figures is in the act of charging his musket, and by his aggressive attitude seems to be threatening some unseen foe in the distance. On the right of the Burgomaster in black is a fair young girl with golden hair, whose scared looks and hurried step denote some sudden alarm. The mysterious ray which reveals her form shines on a dress which in this deceptive light seems to be of glossy satin, resplendent with precious stones. The effect is, however, only a delusion of the *chiaro-oscuro* of our painter, for the girl has nothing shining about her but her eyes and her hair, and the glossy appearance of her dress is but the effect of the magic light which encircles her. Between the sable Burgomaster and "this child of the earth with the golden hair," is a figure which we can only discover after a lengthened study of the piece to be a soldier half concealed, whose helmet is surmounted by a chaplet of oak. Why this figure is introduced at all is a question we cannot solve, but the difficulty is increased by the appearance of flight given to his hurried retreat.

The picture has all the uncertainty of a dream, and all the reality of a passing scene. It is the phantasmagoria of a poetical imagination, united with the material substance of figures, palpable, life-like, and well defined.

The world, indeed, into which Rembrandt introduces us in such pieces as these, is not the every-day matter-of-fact world we see around us. He quits the beaten track of ordinary life to create for himself an ideal region, which he illumines with the magic rays of his own genius. And yet so unjust and false is fame, that even this painter, whose sole object was to elevate the worldly character of his subjects by an ideal and unwonted charm, has been taxed with a *penchant* for low and sensual subjects, and with a dislike for everything that is chaste, noble, and grand. To what was necessarily ugly or displeasing he lends the prestige of his *chiaro-oscuro*, and the poetry of mystery; he covers it, moreover, with the sombre veil of his demi-tints, and invests it with a serious character. Rembrandt was, indeed, a poet of the highest order, who had formed for himself a *beau idéal* as lovely and captivating as it was striking and original. After studying nature in all her phases, he manages to invest her with the character of his own thoughts, and to paint her after his own whims and fancies. The beauty which lures him is not the conventional beauty of which we dare not disturb the outline; he finds beauty in faces over which the storm of human passion has already swept, leaving behind it traces dark and ineradicable. The cold forms of conventional routine he disperses and ignores; he follows no rules or precedents, and shows in all his compositions how much the garish vulgarity of broad daylight disgusts and delays him. His was not simply the art of painting—an art in which many of his contemporaries were also successful—but the art of hallowing with a light peculiarly his own, the inspirations of his genius. In the whole Rembrandt *répertoire* there is nothing trifling or commonplace. Neither on canvas nor on copper has he ever traced anything gross or vulgar. He has drawn many things that are ugly; nothing that is prosaic, for everything that he has bequeathed to us bears the impress of the strange and unearthly mind of the sublime artist. Like the violin of Cremona, his palette seemed to be the abode of some fanciful spirit.

It is certain that Rembrandt's *idée fixe* was that everything was to be effected by a judicious and sudden contrast of strong light and deep shadow.

This gives a certain mannerism to his genius, but it is a mannerism with which all nature sympathises,—death, despair, grief, pain, all love the darkness; while faith, life, hope, joy, love (all happy and pleasing passions), revel in the sunshine, and clothe themselves, as it were, in the prismatic hues of that bright child of the sun, the rainbow. Let us turn, for instance, to that powerful and arresting picture,

### "THE RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS."

It was by a happy inspiration of his singular genius that Rembrandt resolved to make an almost magical effect of light and shade illustrate that great miracle, at the perusal of which, however often we may have read it before, the heart throbs and the eyes fill with tears, and we turn with the fever of vain longing to those on whom the grave has closed, never to give them up again till the last trump summons us all to judgment.

No one can read that mighty miracle, "The Resurrection of Lazarus," without figuring to himself that if the "Lazarus waking from his four days' sleep" had been his own dearest and unforgotten one, he would himself have experienced all those emotions which the artist has so wonderfully depicted in the faces of the bystanders. This constitutes every spectator a critic of a picture of which the "Resurrection of Lazarus" is the subject. For who has not been bereaved?

We realise it so vividly that we can and do compare it involuntarily, but minutely, with that graven on our own mourning hearts. There are very few pictures of this favourite subject which do not bitterly disappoint us. It is in the resources of art to paint Lazarus at his Saviour's call awakening from the cold rigidity of death. It is possible to give to our Saviour's figure something of the serene and radiant majesty of one whose word could awe the king of terrors, and make him release his victim. But what pencil could ever give the joy, the wonder, the rapture, the gratitude, the faces of Mary and of Martha show—loving sisters—when the Son of God, who was also a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, gave them back the mourned, the lost,—that object of pure, deep, trusting, grateful love, a brother—a brother loved in infancy, gloried in in girlhood, clung to in maturer years, and to whom the sister looks forward for protection and comfort through all after life if other hopes fail and other hearts grow cold?

But what no drawing could effect, no colouring or handling, no study, no skill, no art produce, is mastered at once by Rembrandt; and this triumph is owing to the flood of light which represents life, and the mass of shadow, out of which (as indeed out of the land of shadows) Lazarus is summoned by his incarnate God. The drawing, it is true, is feeble, the grouping scattered and deficient in concentration.

After minutely examining the picture, we see that Lazarus looks more like an invalid in a bath than the man for whom "Jesus" had "wept" coming forth from one of the cave-like tombs of Bethany. In this respect, Haydon's great and ill-starred genius had a much finer conception of Lazarus; indeed, nothing can surpass that face in which life is almost seen to dawn on the marble features of the dead. Had the rest of that piece equalled the forms of our Saviour and Lazarus, it would have been a picture in which the nation might have gloried; but the distribution of light and shade, which makes Rembrandt's picture a masterpiece, has destroyed, by its scattered and cold diffusion, the effect of Haydon's view of the same great and solemn miracle.

### "PORTRAIT OF AN OLD MAN."

Portrait painting is not the style in which Rembrandt has achieved his greatest successes. His genius required scope and liberty. He delighted in crowding his canvas with a multiplicity of objects, fantastically conceived, and strangely grouped—some in light, some in darkness, some in demi-tints—according as the rays of that *chiaro-oscuro*, à la Rembrandt, played upon their forms. In such scenes as the "Night Watch," the "Clearing the Temple," or the "Descent from the Cross," Rembrandt was at home; but in portrait painting his genius was cramped, and he was, more or less, compelled to abide by those conventional rules which he despised while he followed them. "The Portrait of an Old Man" has, however, much of the Rembrandt stamp about it. The light on the face is admirably managed, and the beard and mustache are beautiful in their silvery softness. The drapery hangs in graceful folds, and the hands are exquisitely designed. The *tout ensemble* is, however, in spite of its undoubted merit, far less interesting in its burly and well-liking proportions than those figures, half real half ideal, which Rembrandt produced with such unrivalled facility and effect. This good-looking, well-conditioned old man was no original conception of the artist, who, having to paint him as he found him, could only, through the agency of his *chiaro-oscuro*, give him the original stamp of his own genius.

## "THE RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL SON."

This is a subject after Rembrandt's own heart. The piece is an inspired illustration of the most beautiful and affecting parable ever uttered by Christ. We cannot better explain the meaning of the picture than by quoting the words of the Saviour—"And he said, A certain man had two sons : and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together,



THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN. FROM A PAINTING BY REMBRANDT.

and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land ; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country ; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat : and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough, and to spare, and I perish with hunger ! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy

son. . . . . But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him ; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet ; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it ; and let us eat, and be merry." The moment chosen by the painter is that in which the father welcomes, with all a parent's anxiety and affection, his erring but repentant son. Worn, wasted, weary, and



THE THREE TREES. FROM AN ENGRAVING, BY ANANIA.  
(Contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by the Duke of Devonshire.)

footsore, the prodigal has returned to Him who will in no wise cast out those who earnestly seek Him ; and we can read in the expression of his face the feeling which dictated the rebuke to the envious elder brother, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad ; for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again ; and was lost, and is found."

To copy nature in all the minutiae of the model we have chosen for imitation—to reproduce every

tone and every shade, is the perfection of art ; but this is only the secret, not the inspiration, of the painter. In his earlier productions Rembrandt finished his pieces most carefully. Take for instance the different figures in the "Lecturer in Anatomy," which we lately contrasted with the "Night Watch." Every head, when closely examined, presents an infinity of tone, and yet when seen from a proper distance, we trace in the figure but the three elements of the model—light, shade, and demi-tint. This careful attention to finish was highly successful at Amsterdam, where people have a kind of mania for accuracy in little things ; but when Rembrandt had gained courage by experience, he originated for himself a style, bold, harsh, and even rough in appearance, but in reality of dazzling brightness, and almost magical in its faithfulness. How fine soever might be the outline of the model, his effective backgrounds brought it into high relief, and without injuring the contour, without disturbing the proportions, he, with his masculine touch, dashed upon the portion of his canvas illumined by his own magic light some rough strokes of which the apparent rashness was in reality the quick calculation of a finished artist.

That boldness of execution which Rembrandt possessed in the highest degree can only be acquired after long and anxious study by one who is complete master of the palette. The dash of his brush cast, apparently rudely and at random upon the canvas, like mortar on the wall, hit the mark so truly, that it gave, as if by magic, character, motion, life ; made the nostrils breathe, and the eye moisten. And if it be true, as Deschamps declares, that the originals of his portraits were compelled to endure patiently long intervals of indecision in the painter as to the choice of a proper position, of dress, and attitude, they were amply repaid for the annoyance of the moment by the surprising reality of the likeness, the truth of the colouring, and the dazzling beauty of the light, in the blaze of which they saw their own forms reproduced.

We are told that they might consider themselves fortunate if they escaped some cutting sarcasm of Rembrandt, who always expected that every model should submit quietly to his whims or caprices, or renounce the honour of forming the subject of one of his immortal masterpieces.

The mere imitation of the works of nature was a task so infinitely below the great and original genius of Rembrandt that he made of it quite child's-play. In the time which intervened between the completion of one of those masterpieces and the commencement of another, which engrossed the whole energies of his soul, he would sometimes amuse himself with contriving an optical delusion. In the case of inanimate objects, such as fruits, flowers, shells, butterflies, &c., it may be easy to cheat the eye in the manner above described, but to imitate life so as to deceive the living, is a thing so difficult as to be almost incomprehensible. Rembrandt did, nevertheless, on several occasions succeed in this in a manner quite startling to the beholders. He one day conceived the idea of painting his servant in the act of opening the sash, and looking out into the street. For this purpose he cut his canvas the exact size of his window, so that when he had withdrawn the sash, together with the frame, his canvas filled precisely the opening he had made. The attitude of the figure he painted was so true to nature, the hand was so skilfully placed, and the head so full of life and expression, that everybody was deceived by it. This feat, so similar, or rather superior to those which we are told the Greek artists often attempted with success, since the senses are not cheated as in their case by a bunch of grapes or a curtain, but by a living, breathing, moving, sentient figure, might be considered as fabulous if we had not the testimony of Roger de Piles upon the subject, who adds, "I have to this day the work in question in my cabinet."

Dietrich, who was a successful imitator of Rembrandt, remarked to Hagedorn, a clever amateur painter, "If you wish to arrange or light up a picture in the style of Rembrandt, you must also adopt his mode of draping and adjusting the figures. Unless you attend to this, your work will be wanting in that seasoning which would constitute its greatest charm." Dietrich was right ; and it is strange that so distinguished an amateur as Hagedorn should not only not have felt the wisdom of the remark, but should have made the following comment upon it in his book—"I, nevertheless, think if Rembrandt, that successful colourist, had, like Poussin, made himself master of all the other departments of his art, he would have been but the more appreciated for it, and that the union in one person of two perfections—vigour of colouring, and historical truth and accuracy—would but have increased his renown."

Nothing could be more ridiculously false than this assumption of Hagedorn. If Rembrandt had

painted in the style of Poussin, he would no longer have been Rembrandt. How could a painter who appeals entirely to the imagination of his spectators, and depends so wholly upon his own, stop to consult historical truth, the fitness of costume, the *beau-ideal* of form, the unities of the piece, and the faithfulness of tradition?

Let others exult in their highly finished conceptions of those lovely Athenian maids, who, like so many impersonations of classic beauty, gracefully move in the Panathenaic procession. Routine and finish may triumph in these forms, for on them the illusions of Rembrandt's magic lights would be wasted. Classic forms are the children of the Land of the Sun, and it would be a violation of all the unities to imprison them in the cave of the alchemist. What have the warriors of Rome and Athens—the heroes of the buskin and the toga—in common with the cell in which Dr. Faustus believes in the apparition of cabalistic letters? Shall I regret that Rembrandt, when he introduces me into the twilight of the synagogue, does not people the scene with the classic heroes of antiquity? It would be madness to complain of the absence in Rembrandt of those characteristics of his art which would deprive him of his great merit—his striking originality—his peculiar style; the expression, and even beauty, with which he can invest forms hideous in themselves—in a word, his genius for effect! Of what benefit or advantage to him are the accuracy of the drawing, and the finish of the outline, which must be buried in the depths of his shadows? of what use the knowledge of costume, when he appeals to our imagination, and not to our memory? Besides, what history, what traditions, what peculiar costumes have the astrologers, the magicians, the beggars, &c., of any age or any country? That father whom Rembrandt has reproduced upon canvas at the moment he is about to appease his angry God by the sacrifice of his offspring—the fruit of his loins—is so startling and life-like in his expression and attitude, that we never stop to inquire whether he is Agamemnon or Abraham, and care but little whether he wears the helmet of the Greeks, or the turban of the Jews. The object of the painter is to awaken our interest in the fate of the young victim, carrying, with sublime resignation, the wood for self-sacrifice. It is to our feelings, and not to our learning, that he appeals; and touched to the heart by the inspired composition, the spectator, as he gazes on the varied expression of the patriarch, the son, and the angel, forgets to criticise the unities of the piece. He would as soon think of upbraiding Poussin, in an Arcadian scene, with a deficiency of *chiaro-oscuro*.

#### “THE THREE TREES.”

This beautiful landscape is from an engraving by Rembrandt, in the Art Treasures Exhibition. Rembrandt was as famous an engraver as he was painter. From Amsterdam to Rome his etchings on copper were unrivalled in the world of art. From the remotest corners of Italy, print-sellers came to offer him gold in exchange for his proof engravings. Rembrandt the while, shut up in his *atelier*, plied with indefatigable industry, in silence and in solitude, his magic art. He encouraged the notion generally entertained that he was in possession of secrets which had never been revealed to any one save himself. He knew the truth of the old proverb, “*Omne ignotum pro mirifico*,” and was therefore convinced that an engraving, however unimportant, coming from a laboratory where no one had ever penetrated, would be welcome in proportion to the mystery which surrounded it. He very much economised his labour by publishing as different engravings impressions from the same plate, slightly varied, by the agency of powerful acids. He charged immensely dear for engravings of this sort, and the higher the price he put upon them the more eager were his subscribers to purchase them.

Houbraken, who is no friend to Rembrandt, declares that he was a regular Jew in his dealings with the public, and that the tricks to which he had recourse in raising the price of his works were worthy of Nathan or Moses. He has been known to bid himself for his own engravings, against eager customers, and often commissioned his son, in disguise, to sell them as stolen goods. Houbraken adds, that when he saw that his countrymen were getting disgusted at his avarice, he would alarm them with the threat of removing to England, where greater and more liberal encouragement was given to art. By these means he got up a kind of forced excitement about himself; for the people around him, fearing to lose their opportunity if they suffered him to leave the country before they had made their purchases, were willing to give any price for his engravings.

According to the same authority, he once circulated the report of his own death, for the sole

gratification of coming to life again among the startled and terrified heirs of his portfolios, now rendered priceless by the supposed death of the artist. He was extremely capricious in his dealings with purchasers. Bidders were required to cajole and flatter him, as well as offer large sums for his



DR. FAUSTUS. FROM A PAINTING BY REMBRANDT.

works, and he has been known to refuse a hundred florins for an engraving when the offer was unaccompanied with some personal compliment.

His engravings were everywhere the rage. No household was considered complete without proof



impressions of some of the most popular of them. The avarice of old Queen Charlotte occasioned George III. much amusement, and he is said to have laughed until he cried when the Queen, deceived by the guinea which Sir William Beechy had painted on the floor over which she had to pass, eagerly stooped to pick it up. The pupils of Rembrandt, according to Houbraken, played their master a similar



THE PURSEMASTER NIX. FROM AN ENGRAVING BY REMBRANDT.  
(Contributed to the Art Treasures Exhibition by the Duke of Buccleuch.)

trick. They copied, on pieces of cardboard, scattered over the room, the gold coins of which their master was so fond, with such accuracy, that, experienced as was his eye, they often succeeded in deceiving him, and from their hiding-places laughed at his rage and disappointment, when he discovered the trick that had been played upon him. All these stories are, however, the inventions of rivals and enemies.

Rembrandt may have coveted money, but not for the purpose of hoarding it, like a Harpagon or a Daniel Dance. He valued riches as a security against the slavery of dependence; he prized them only as a ransom from that terrible gaoler of the soul, "iron poverty." With him money was but the representative of noble enjoyments—of those refining pleasures which the contemplation of beautiful objects procures for its possessor. In the engraving of "The Three Trees," Rembrandt has called all his miraculous powers of *chiaro-oscuro* to his aid. The effect of that glorious light, which brings the well-defined trio into such high relief, is sublimely contrasted with the dark flood of shadow which covers, like a canopy, the rest of the sky. The clear and placid stream—the fisherman and his companion—the flat and monotonous surface of the landscape—the distant windmills, scattered at intervals, and proclaiming the proximity of one of those fine old towns which are so peculiarly characteristic of the Netherlands—give a reality to the simple scene.

#### "DR. FAUSTUS."

This is another curious and striking vagary of the genius of the great master of effect. The cabalistic letters that illuminate, with a sun-like radiance, the antique window, give us assurance of the magical power that resides in a very common-looking night-capped old fellow, who looks more like an invalid shop-keeper, whose window some mischievous boy has just broken, than that Faust, whom the genius of Goethe has invested with so much weird beauty and mysterious poetry. We are accustomed to consider Faust, before he sold his soul for youth, beauty, and love, to have been a majestic, picturesque old man, with furrowed brow and shaggy eyebrows, long gray beard, and stately gait. The figure of Faust in Rembrandt's picture is, therefore, far from satisfying the mind; but the power of the magician, as evinced by the circular blaze of light in which the mystic letters appear, more than atones for the meanness of the man. In all Rembrandt's pictures, light is the principal character, shadow the next; and if these play their part well, he troubles himself little with the rest. Even when the subject is "The Descent from the Cross," he cares less for the conception of the Saviour's form than for the management of the light that pours down on it like a flood; and if even the Redeemer's figure was sacrificed to this one great idea, with, perhaps, an indirect allusion to the words "I am the Light of the World," he would not, of course trouble himself to give much finish or dignity to the person of Dr. Faustus.

#### "THE BURGOMASTER SIX"

is a portrait well known to all artists, lovers of wit, and connoisseurs. It is certainly a very singular and effective picture. The light and shade are so curiously and adroitly managed, that the face seems alive with the serious, demure life becoming a person so important as the wealthy burgomaster of the Low Countries. This admirably managed light seems to flicker across the features and the hand, and to be in a manner reflected from the page he is perusing.

But either "Burgomaster Six," proud as he seems to be of his leg, had some malformation of that choicely arrayed limb—and that, too, of the one which we may presume to be the "best" one, as he has "put it foremost"—or Rembrandt is guilty of a great error in the drawing of it; for it decidedly has a crooked and even dislocated appearance. But for this drawback, the drawing of the figure is more correct and careful than Rembrandt's generally is. The hands are particularly good; and there is a truth and reality about the whole person that makes one feel as if one must henceforth enter on one's list of friends "The Burgomaster Six."

There is a vivid exactitude of detail about the richly furnished room, and an *ensemble* so truly Dutch in the whole "interior," that we are transported, as we gaze on it, back to the beginning of the seventeenth century, and to the magisterial *sanctum sanctorum* of a burgomaster of the Netherlands. His robes and badges of office lie in the shadow, while a soft light dances on the hilt of his sword. A massive chair is piled with huge note-books, or records, in which we hope—and, judging from his earnest, intelligent face, believe—that he was never, like Dogberry, "written down an ass."

The oaken floor on which he stands, the stone-mullioned arched window, and the massive draperies that overhang it, all—even to the half-curtained picture—are true to the life: the life of a wealthy Dutch magistrate two hundred and fifty years ago. This portrait is engraved with such exquisite

delicacy and finish, that it is more like a masterly miniature, painted in Indian ink, than a mere copper-plate engraving. This portrait has always been held in very great esteem by amateurs and connoisseurs, and to them "Burgomaster Six" is an historical personage, merely because his portrait has been bequeathed to them by Rembrandt, on one of those fly-leaves, the smallest of which will, perhaps, outlive the memory of many an emperor.

"PORTRAIT OF REMBRANDT."

The portrait of Rembrandt, now before us, is one of many painted by himself, for he has depicted himself at all the intermediate stages of life from youth to age. We have no positive indication of the number of years he had counted when the present portrait was taken ; but

" Upon his forehead middle age  
Had slightly pressed its signet sage,  
Yet could not quench the open truth,  
The fiery vehemence of youth."

His hair, which was of a reddish auburn, is still abundant, and floats on his shoulders, and a velvet cap sits jauntily on his broad, intelligent brow. His eyes are small and deep-seated, but brilliant and full of speculation ; the nose is flat, coarse, and of very plebeian character ; but the mouth is finely shaped, humorous, and expressive. The rich complexion which generally accompanies red or auburn hair, gave a certain beauty to Rembrandt's face in his youth, and united with his long, bright tresses to give him a reputation for good looks, not to say beauty.

Rembrandt amassed at length a considerable fortune. His school of painting, consisting of pupils from some of the richest families in Amsterdam, brought him in a large income. His contemporary, Sandrart, has recorded that each of these pupils paid him at the rate of a hundred florins per annum at least ; and adds, moreover, that the work done by the scholars was touched up by Rembrandt, who, when he had given it the stamp of his own style, sold it as an original production. In this way he made his school doubly profitable to him. We are informed, indeed, that the paintings of Ferdinand Bol, Fictoor, De Flinsk, and Van Eckout, some of his principal pupils, when finished by himself, produced, on the average, a yearly sum of 2,500 florins, or about £250 ; and when we take into account the immense difference between the value of money in the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries, we shall understand how large were his profits.

His own genuine works on canvas, cardboard, and copper—for he was equally skilful with the brush, the pencil, and the graver—the sale of which more than doubled, or perhaps even trebled, this sum, would have enabled him, had he been so inclined, to live in luxury with the rich merchants of his native town. He was, however, except on grand occasions, very abstemious in his diet. His dinner, we are told, generally consisted of a salt herring and a bit of Dutch cheese—food, in our opinion, neither wholesome nor inviting ; and his predilections and tastes were all with the people. He hated courts and courtiers, and despised rank and ceremony. When on one occasion a friend reproached him with his plebeian tastes, he replied, " The rest which I often require after labour I never find in the society of those whose splendour and refinement are a restraint upon me."

Nevertheless, this rude and original genius had many friends among the higher orders of society. Tulp, the celebrated physiologist, Ambraham France, the great gold merchant, James Latma, and last, though not least, his intimate friend Bourgomaster Six, would willingly have introduced into the *beau monde* an artist whose reputation would have made him a lion wherever he appeared. But he hated notoriety, and in consequence refused all introductions.

Humorous and sarcastic as he really was, his satire never lost him a friend. The genuine benevolence of his disposition shone through everything that he either did or said, and compensated for the poignancy of his wit.

John Six, when only secretary of the Town-hall at Amsterdam, wrote a tragedy entitled "*Medea*." Rembrandt, as a proof of his friendship for the author, illustrated this tragedy with his inimitable engraving of the "*Marriage of Jason*," which seems to be the fairy production of an enchanter's wand. That marvellous temple, dazzling with light—that sanctuary redolent with the incense offered to the

gods of the heathens,—that *chiaro-oscuro*, in which we dimly discover the outline of Medea (an actress richly adorned) meditating her inhuman revenge, all gave a kind of magical effect to this engraving—precisely the effect which the artist had wished to produce. In this composition we find the famous statue of Juno, of which the impressions, with or without her crown, were sold for almost fabulous sums. The effect which the artist has produced with nothing but simple white and black seems almost miraculous.

Rembrandt first acquired his taste for landscape painting during the trips he was in the habit of



REMBRANDT. FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF.

making to the country house of his friend the Burgomaster. All his landscapes have a sombre melancholy about them which his followers have vainly endeavoured to imitate. He loved to transcribe upon canvas the conflict of the elements—the struggle for the mastery between the sun and the storm. The component parts of these pieces are simple in the extreme. Out of a barge lying motionless on the still waters of a canal, of a bull fastened by a rope to the trunk of an old tree, of a lonely pathway in a wood, he can conjure up a scene which is highly suggestive, and which supplies plenty of food for meditation. Sometimes, when the landscape is veiled in shadow, and a dreamy stillness reigns around, the painter—drawing his inspiration from the scene—composes in his tableau a suggestive drama. He



ADRIAN VAN OSTADE. FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF

treats the country before him as though it were a vast chamber, of which the vault of heaven is the ceiling, and into which the sunshine only penetrates by broken rays, which he intercepts with the introduction of rows of dark trees. The landscape of "The Three Trees," upon which we have already made our comments, is a beautiful type of this kind of landscape. It is considered by connoisseurs to be one of Rembrandt's greatest *chefs-d'œuvre*, and is certainly peculiarly characteristic of the style of the painter. There is another landscape, entitled "Le Pont de Six," of which the impressions are now very rare, and which we only mention on account of the story connected with it. One day when Rembrandt was on a visit to his patron the Burgomaster, the footman announced that dinner was ready; but, as the friends were sitting down to table, they saw there was no mustard. The Burgomaster hurried off the servant to the village, but Rembrandt, who was himself of an impatient disposition, being aware of the snail-like propensities of this messenger, made a wager with his friend, that he would engrave a plate before the arrival of the mustard. Six accepted the wager; and as the artist never travelled without his tools, or his plates ready prepared, he set to work, and before the return of the servant had engraved a view of the country as seen from the windows of the room in which they were sitting.



The productions of Rembrandt have been counterfeited in every possible way. Of his most trifling sketches there have been copies and *fac similes* innumerable, of more or less merit. Artists of every subsequent age and of every country have ~~viewed with each other~~ in their imitations of this great master. Among the most successful copiers we may mention Basan, Folkema, our own Richard Wilson, James Hazard, and M. Denon. Painters who ~~are their own engravers~~ attend but little to the minutiae of the art. With them the end is everything, the means are unimportant. The proper disposition of light and shade is all that they study. They use the steel point on their copper-plate as they would their pencil on card-board, or their brush upon the canvas, and, despising all the refinement of the engravers' skill, they think only of translating upon copper the conceptions of their minds. And they are right : for of what avail are all the dogmas and precepts of the schools without the inspiration of genius? In his celebrated portrait of Lutma, how successfully has Rembrandt ignored all the jargon of the professional engraver. His random strokes produce the most happy effects ; and his instinct, always more correct than the elaborate calculation of others, compensates for a deficiency in the knowledge of the art. People who have a taste for the marvellous have always discovered something mysterious, not to say supernatural, in the effects produced by Rembrandt. The Chevalier de Clausin is said to have devoted thirty-six years of his life to the study of Rembrandt's secret ; but notwithstanding all his zeal and labour, he was wrong in attributing to the artist so many different contrivances for producing the desired effect. The truth is, that Rembrandt's method of engraving was extremely simple, and instead of employing seven different means, he knew only of three. But it is in vain for men who have not the talisman of genius to attempt to fathom the secrets of his success ! Suffice it to say, that in his own peculiar style of engraving he has never had a rival. Of all the great masters who have been their own engravers not one has achieved the world-wide popularity of Rembrandt ; and the volumes upon volumes that have been written on his works attest the truth of our assertion. His *chefs-d'œuvre* are, with a very few exceptions, exhibited in public galleries or celebrated private collections. But when, through any casualty, a painting by this great master comes into the market, the competition for it is so great that it is impossible to give any correct estimate of its value.

It was long believed that Rembrandt died either in 1668 or in 1674 ; but it has lately been proved by the burial registers of the Church of Westerkerk, at Amsterdam, that he was interred on the 9th of October, 1669.

He died poor, in spite of the avarice of which he has been accused. After he lost his wife Saskia (an event which occurred in 1642), he was obliged to make good certain sums to his son Titus, who was a minor.

His whole capital at this time was invested in works of art and objects of *virtu*, and the war at that time going on between England and Holland had greatly depreciated the value of such property. His son's guardian compelled the announcement of sale by auction of Rembrandt's dwelling-house in the Beerstraat (the Jew's quarter) of Amsterdam, but there was not a single bid for it. His collection of pictures, engravings, drawings, bronzes, arms, and costumes, were sold by the Court of Insolvency, and scarcely realised what Rembrandt owed his creditors, the chief of whom was the Burgomaster Corneille Witzen. After this cruel, harrowing sale of all he had so long delighted to collect, Rembrandt retired to Le Rosengraat (*Quai des Roses*), Amsterdam, married his second wife, a pretty young peasant girl, and by her he had two children (his sole heirs), for his son Titus preceded him to the grave. How false does all this prove the assertion that Rembrandt was a miser. A miser ! Had this great genius been even a careful man, would he have squandered a fortune on works of art ? would he have been led on to pay the enormous sums he did at sales, at auctions ? would he have been sold up as he was ? would he have died insolvent ?

#### HIS MERITS.

Well did Rembrandt merit the statue erected to his honour at Amsterdam, and the shrine he carved for himself in the memory, not merely of his own nation, but of the whole civilised world.

He was at once a great poet, a sublime painter, and an inimitable engraver.

No one has approached him in the essential points of the mastery of light and shade, otherwise called *chiaro-oscuro*, in delicacy of touch, and eloquence of expression.

If there is nothing noble in the drawing of his figures, and if his proportions are not always just, his sentiment is never false. He always enters fully into the feeling of his subject. His faults are inseparable from his beauties—they form one great whole. No one could improve on Rembrandt, while all can condemn.

As we have said, his *chiaro-oscuro* is unrivalled. No lights, either *en masse* or in detail, are so bright, no shadows so transparent in their depth.

Neither Correggio, nor Giorgione, surpass him in the arresting charm of their pictures. Often rough and rugged, he could be, when he pleased, soft, delicate, and exact.

Rembrandt at one time blends his tones with exquisite skill, subdues the shadows, softens the golden lights. At another he dares everything, and plasters his colours so, that to a close observer, they look like accidental blotches, but yet, from a certain distance, have a masterly effect. He was always sure what he was about; always certain of the result of what seems most hazardous.

He objected to close scrutiny, and used to say, half in jest, when any one drew too near, that "the smell of paint was unwholesome, and ought not to be inhaled."

None but a great master of perspective could have insisted thus on a certain distance.

Of his portraits we say with De Piles, they need fear comparison with none of the *chef-d'œuvre* of the greatest masters; indeed there are few that do not lose by being placed side by side with those of the great Rembrandt.

## ADRIAN VAN OSTADE.

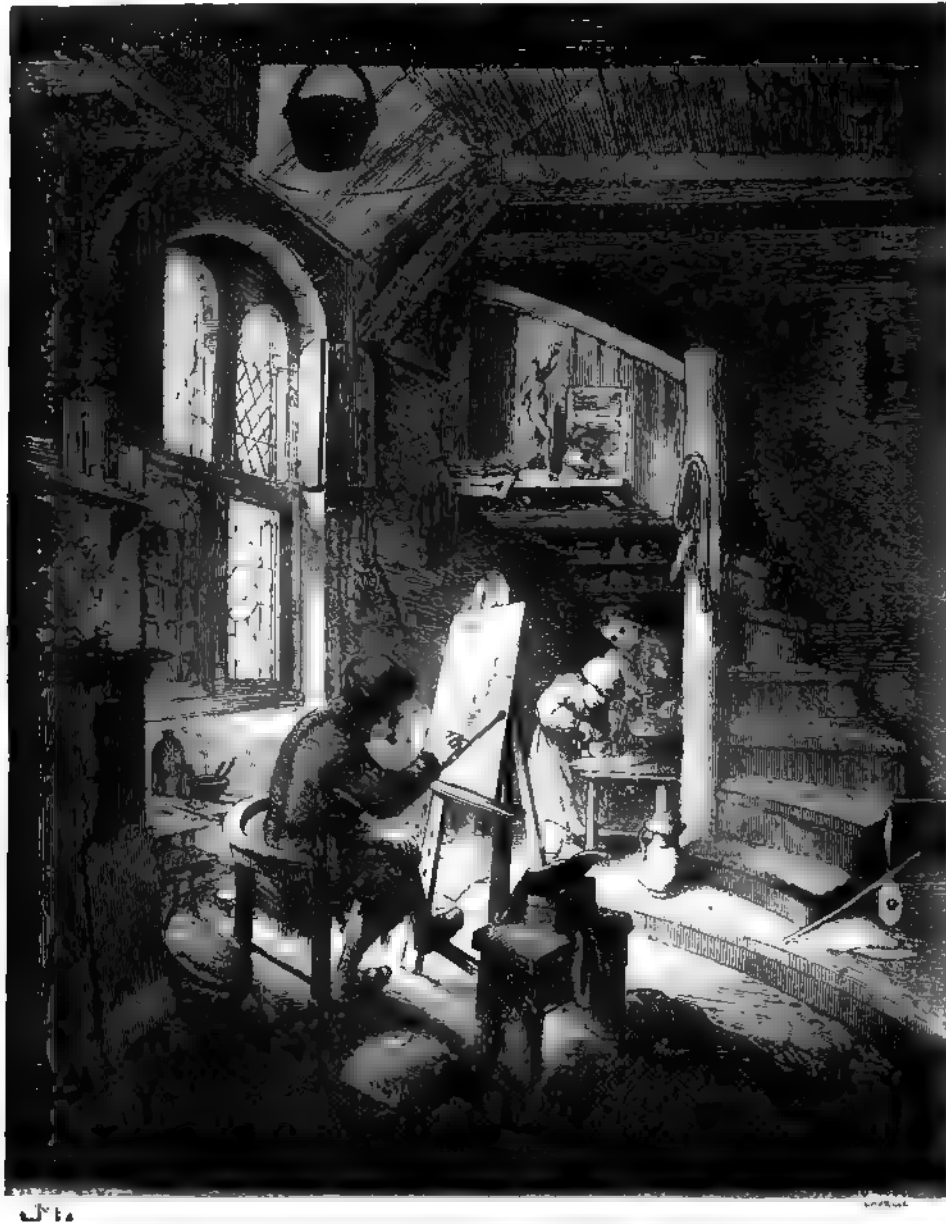


ADRIAN VAN OSTADE was a master of the highest eminence. In depth of thought, originality of genius, and knowledge of design, he was inferior only to Rembrandt. He formed one of the band of painters who, in the seventeenth century, left Germany for the purpose of settling in the Netherlands, which were, at that time, the favourite asylum of the *amateurs* of all nations. In every part of Holland there were, at the era of which we are writing, galleries of paintings, which made of the province a kind of Italy of the north. The encouragement there offered to their art attracted, one after another, from the less inviting circles of Germany, Adrian and Isaac Van Ostade, Backhuysen, Lingelack, and Gaspar Netherer, who were all Germans by birth.

Adrian Van Ostade was born at Lubeck, in 1610. Of his family we know positively nothing, and even concerning the painter himself very few particulars have been handed down to us. In those warlike and semi-barbarous times people cared so little about the arts of peace, that no one would have thought it worth his while to collect the *matériel* for a history of painters. Still it is strange that even in Holland, the northern nurse of art, among all the admirers of his genius, there was not one found to give us any trustworthy and interesting biography of this celebrated artist. For us the life of Adrian Van Ostade begins with his professional *début* at Harlem, where he studied for a time in the *atelier* of Frank Hals, a painter of a bold and vigorous style, who had large ideas, and used bright colouring. In his representation of Flemish scenes he often exaggerated to such a degree, that he shocked Vandyck, who recommended him more moderation, and more strict attention to historical accuracy. But Adrian Van Ostade approved of the exaggerations of his master, and, despite his birth, was in his nature a regular Dutchman. In his style of art, as well as in his appearance, he belonged entirely to the country of his adoption. The expression of his face—which was serious, benevolent, and open—was indicative of the simplicity of his character and the regularity of his life. The studied arrangement of his subjects, and their exquisite finish, sufficiently attest the conscientious care of the artist, his patience, and his industry.

But it would be considered presumptuous in any one, and especially in an amateur, to attempt a sketch of Van Ostade, after the excellent likeness he has bequeathed to us of himself, in the celebrated

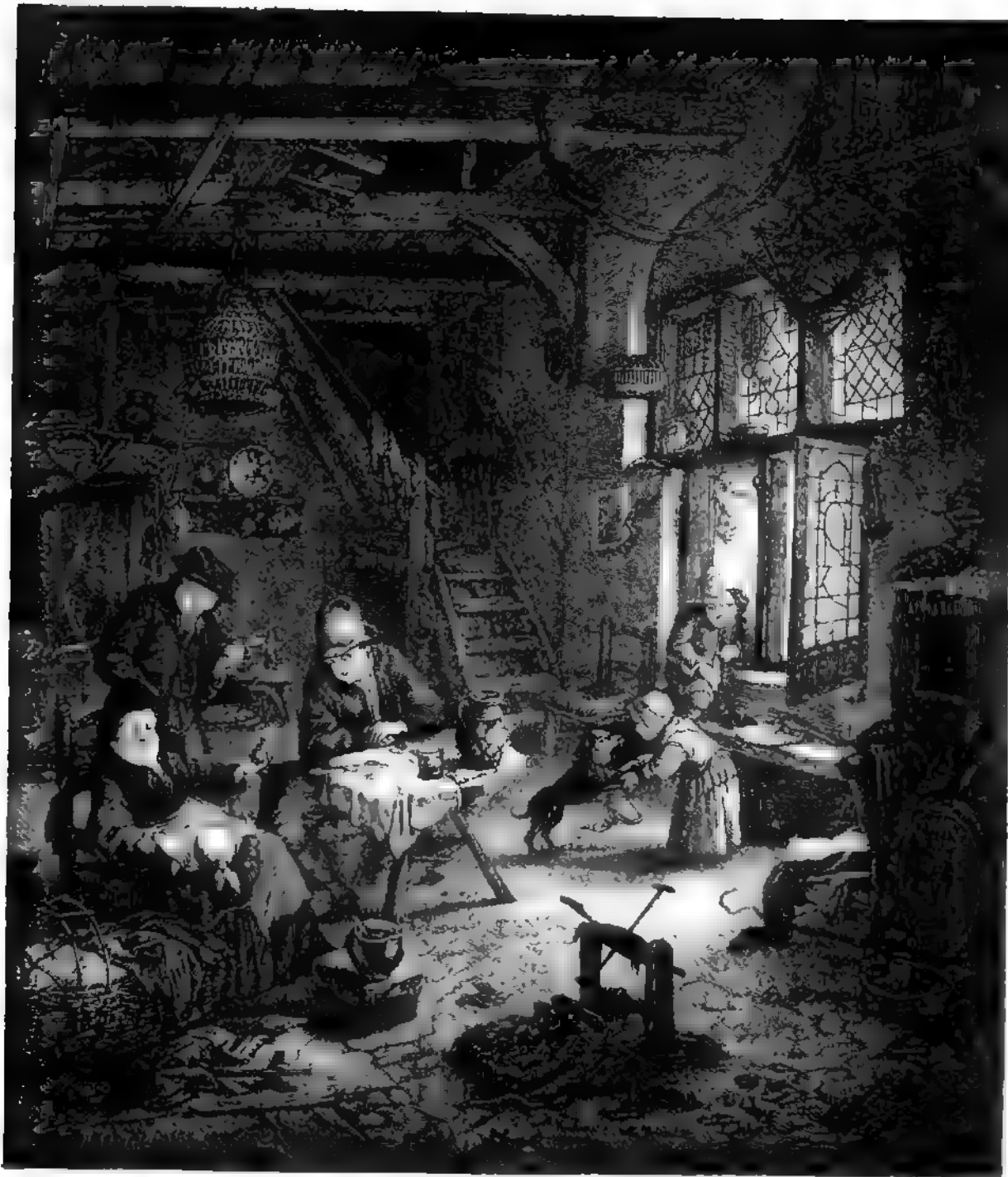
picture at the Louvre, in which he has painted himself surrounded by his numerous family. That picture is, in all its details, thoroughly Dutch. The genius of the country breathes in every stroke. The character of the family—their calm, phlegmatic nature—their blameless and simple lives—the even tenor of their days—are all faithfully represented on that marvellous piece of canvas. The



A PAINTER'S ATELIER. FROM A PAINTING BY VAN OSTADE.

painter's style tallies admirably with the character of his picture. Ostade himself, his wife, and his eight children, are all ranged in their respective order, according to their age and size, on a large canvas, illumined by a soft mellow light. The whole furniture of the room consists of a large four-post bedstead. The walls are of a light gray, inclining to green, which harmonises well with the background of the piece. The white collars and dark garments of the figures stand out in full relief against





A RUSTIC INTERIOR. FROM A PAINTING BY VAN OSTADE.

the gray background. Of the girls and boys, the youngest is perhaps about eight; but they are all so like, in feature and in form, and are, moreover, such *fac-similes* of their parents, that there is no question about their being "true chips of the old blocks." They are, indeed, in feature and costume, all as much alike as so many peas. Van Ostade—like a king among his subjects—alone wears his hat;

all the others, upon whom he casts a patronising, paternal glance, are bareheaded. The house is the very perfection of cold, conventional neatness and cleanliness; the boards of the floor are resplendent with their slippery varnish of wax; and on the even surface nothing is seen but a flower here and there, dropped from the nosegay which the children are presenting to their father, whose birthday they are, in all probability, celebrating, if we may judge by the clean and Sunday-like appearance of their dress. The whole picture is quiet and sober in its tone. The monotony of its lights and shades is unbroken by any experimental or fanciful variations; and although the contrast of the white and black may appear at first too uniform, it is so skilfully shaded off that it relieves, without impairing, the characteristic calm of the piece, and awakens the attention of the spectator without destroying the unity of the picture.

This *chef-d'œuvre* is quite unique of its kind; a charming conception, redolent of domestic peace, of the tranquil enjoyment of a united family, animated with the same hopes, the same fears, the same interests—from the father, who holds his wife's hand in his own, to the youngest boy, who is giving some cherries to his little sister. The very mention of Van Ostade's name conjures up in the memory a variety of similar scenes.

We have been thus particular in our description of this family masterpiece, because the meagre records we have of the painter himself leave us little but his productions from which we can form an estimate of his character. Van Ostade, however, did not come forth at once, "like Pallas armed," a full-fledged painter. He studied long and zealously under his master Hals. He was not, like many of his *confrères*, dazzled by the name of Italy, or seduced from the steady pursuit of the knowledge of his art by the fatal fascinations of travel. Neither Rembrandt nor Van Ostade joined the throng of those who saw in Italy a kind of El Dorado of art, and flocked to it as eagerly as palmers did in earlier times to Jerusalem.

While studying under Hals, he formed a friendship for a fellow-student of the name of Brawer, whose Christian name was also Adrian, and who had already acquired, unknown to himself, so much skill in his art, that he became the object of what is technically called a *conspiracy*. Frank Hals and his wife were unprincipled misers, and together they conspired so successfully against the liberty of their pupil, that he was thrown into prison, where he produced several beautiful pictures, of which his infamous master received all the profits. Ostade, who was a witness of their wickedness, convinced Brawer that he could support himself by his talents, and advised him to make his escape. Brawer followed his friend's advice, and soon became famous.

When Adrian Van Ostade left Frank Hals's *atelier*, he was some little time before he discovered the style of painting for which he had the greatest natural facility.

He was, indeed, much tempted to emulate the style of Rembrandt, with which Francis Hals had often something in common; but there was even in the weakest productions of Rembrandt a sublime grandeur, a poetry of conception, which was infinitely above the uninspiring genius of Van Ostade. But in Teniers he found a congenial spirit—a painter, indeed, whose disposition and style exactly tallied with his own predilections. His old friend Brawer, to whom he had been of so much service, had now become a painter of some note; and meeting Van Ostade one day, while the latter was still in doubt as to the style he should adopt, he clinched the matter by proving to him, that, as Rembrandt was unapproachable, it was quite as well to be an Ostade as a Teniers. The wavering artist then determined on his course; but although he adopted a style entirely original, he possessed in his designs many of the characteristics which he had borrowed from Rembrandt and Teniers—he was, at the same time, a household Rembrandt and a serious Teniers.

#### HIS PORTRAIT.

In person Adrian Van Ostade was decidedly good-looking. Though his cast of features, his make, and his manners were all thoroughly Dutch, there was about him that indefinable charm with which genius can invest the most ordinary forms, and which in the case of Van Ostade redeemed the habitual phlegm of the Dutch type, to which he so essentially belonged. The expression of his features was grave, without being melancholy, and their serious character was softened and mellowed by the beaming benevolence which always lighted up his countenance. The features, taken separately, were what the

French would call *bien prononcés*; but, taken together, they harmonised so well with each other, that the *tout ensemble* was regular and pleasing. The sober, staid, and quaker-like fashion of his dress adds to the natural seriousness of his appearance.

Harlem is the second city of Holland. Its fine streets and spacious squares, its numerous places of amusement, and its wealthy inhabitants, all contributed to make it exactly the place in which an artist of Van Ostade's genius might succeed. The villages of Hemstedt, Sporenwou, and Tetrode, which lay at convenient distances from Harlem, gave him the opportunity of studying the rustic manners of the people, while the wealthy citizens never tired of patronising the artist. Harlem beer was famous all over Holland, and the city where it was brewed furnished, in consequence, abundance of examples of drinkers and smokers. Van Ostade has immortalised the race by his graphic masterpieces.

Early in life he had married the daughter of the great painter of sea-pieces, Van Goyen, and he has left us, in the family *tableau* to which we lately alluded, an enduring evidence of the rapidity with which his family increased. To provide for the very questionable blessing of so numerous an offspring, Van Ostade was compelled to lead a laborious and sedentary life. He was a disciple of that school of philosophers who hold

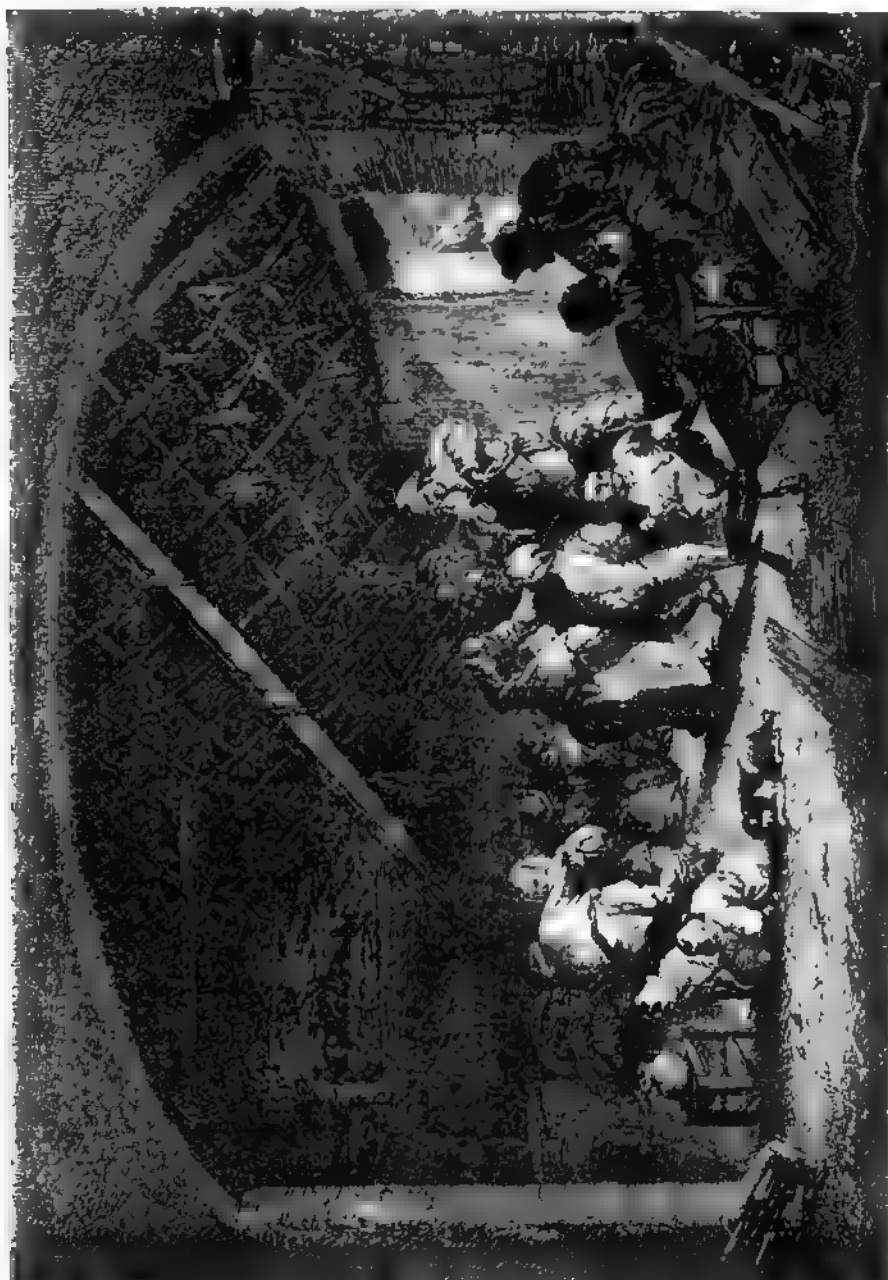
"Man wants but little here below,  
Nor wants that little long."

But, although he was quite convinced of the truth of the old maxim that "two removes are as bad as a fire," and, in consequence, stuck most tenaciously to the spot where Fate had planted him, he was so decidedly pacific in all his predilections, that even the bare rumour of wars and disturbances in the neighbouring provinces was sufficient to induce him to give up his house, his associates and friends, and leave Harlem, with the intention of returning to his native city of Lubeck. "In passing, however, through Amsterdam," says the historian Houbraeken, "on his road to Lubeck, a connoisseur, of the name of Constantine Sennepart, argued the point so successfully that he induced Van Ostade to stay on a visit at his house. He convinced the painter of the many advantages he would enjoy by settling in so large, important, and flourishing a town as Amsterdam, where his works were so much valued, and where there were so many citizens wealthy enough to purchase them at a highly-remunerative price.

Van Ostade accordingly took up his residence at Amsterdam about the year 1662, and set about that collection of drawings for which Mr. Jonas Witzen gave the sum of 1,300 florins, or about £120. At the time that he removed to Amsterdam, that beautiful and flourishing city was the favourite resort of connoisseurs from all the neighbouring countries. Painters who have earned for themselves imperishable fame, thronged to this great emporium of art. All classes of society, all ranks and conditions of men, had at Amsterdam their respective artist. The celebrated Dutch Fairs of Lingelbach, the hunting-pieces and sea-ports of Wouvermans, vied in public estimation with the finished and faithful little portraits of Gerard Douw, or with those full-length likenesses of Abraham Van Tempel, which, in style and colouring, are almost equal to the productions of Vandyck, and of which the fair complexions and rich satin drapery fascinated the eye of every spectator. Nor were the elaborate interiors of Dutch dwellings, depicted by Gabriel Metz, with their life-like representations of ladies at their toilette tables or their harpsichords, or of beaux writing love letters, or displaying their accomplishments in boudoir or drawing-room, unappreciated in Amsterdam. As to our old friend Adrian Brawer, he was now without a rival in his own peculiar beat of painter of tavern brawls, of dicers and drunkards; and Paul Potter found a ready market for his shepherds and their flocks; while the aged Rembrandt, now full of years and glory, from the unexplored recesses of his secret *atelier*, ruled with despotic sway the whole race of amateurs; awed them by his genius, and enforced their admiration of his works.

It was amid this brilliant galaxy of artistic talent that the star of Adrian Van Ostade first dawned upon Amsterdam. Great, however, as was the competitive merit with which he had to contend, he was not long in asserting his proper place and power. He did for Protestant Holland what Teniers had done before him for Roman Catholic Flanders. The vast and unaccountable distinction between the appearance, character, manners, tastes, and fashions of the two nations, who are so closely connected

as almost to form one people, is not more remarkable than the difference in the style of their respective painters—the one is, in all probability, the result of the other. Between the peasantry of Flanders and of Holland how broad the line of demarcation!



A RUSTIC DANCE FROM A PAINTING BY JAN WUYTACK.

Their respective characters, as displayed in their different modes of merrymaking, have scarcely a point of resemblance. "The Kermesse," or village festival of the Flemings, of which we gave so graphic an illustration from a painting by Rubens, is an orgie of the noisiest and most joyous kind, in which drinking, dancing, singing, shouting, laughing, and love-making have each their favourite votaries



THE DUTCH CABARET. FROM A PAINTING BY VAN OSTADE.

"Laughter holding both his sides" is one of the most impressive types of a Flemish kermesse; while, on the other hand, the usual festival of the Dutch is a serious, sober-looking (we say *looking*, for the sobriety is only on the surface), phlegmatic, and silent affair. There is little apparent conviviality, though the guests manage to dispose, in their own quiet way, of whole hogsheads of good liquor. In fact, if we may credit the admirable representation which Van Ostade has bequeathed to us of these country merry-makings, the women drink almost as much as the men, and all, of either sex, are furnished with glasses of the most capacious dimensions, which they are constantly replenishing. The tapsters grow weary of their never-ceasing expeditions to the cellar, in their vain attempt to quench the thirst of their all-absorbing customers. In lamenting over this characteristic vice of his parishioners, the rector of Meudon (a Dutch village) observes that the tapster of the inn ought, like Briareus, to have a hundred hands, that he might be for ever filling the cups of his insatiable customers; and well does the appearance of the figures introduced by Van Ostade into his national pieces corroborate the truth of this observation. Those eager eyes and those enormous mouths, which cannot slake their thirst out of glasses almost as deep and as large as a well, cleaving with feverish lips to the tankard, which they empty at a draught, give us a melancholy picture of Dutch inebriety.

These pieces of Van Ostade are enduring monuments of the manners of the time, and might do for illustrations of those celebrated scenes of Rabelais, in which Garagantua, drinking with Friar John, exclaims at intervals, as often as he can draw breath, "How kind is Providence to give us such good liquor!"

#### "A PAINTER'S ATELIER."

The transparency of his colouring, though perhaps the greatest, is not the only merit of Van Ostade's pieces; as a proof of this fact, we adduce the almost priceless value of the engravings taken from his pictures. We mean those engravings which he executed himself, for Van Ostade, like most of the Dutch painters, was himself an engraver. And yet, notwithstanding the estimation in which these engravings are held, we discover in them many of Van Ostade's principal defects. Artists, whose minds are easily impressed with external objects, greatly value the power of recording on copper the passing scenes which strike them as worthy of being remembered. The artist, like the poet, in a moment of inspiration, transfers with his graver to the copperplate the outline of the objects which have captivated his fancy; and it often happens that the hurried sketch taken at the moment possesses more fire and effect than the most elaborate productions.

The engravings of Van Ostade are remarkable for the care and labour bestowed upon them. Not a line is without its meaning, not an indenture is made which does not in some way or another contribute to the expression of a face, to the sit of a garment, or to the attitude of a figure. The lights and shades are generally cut very short, and it is only in exceptional cases that the demi-tints are multiplied.

The engraving of "A Painter's *Atelier*," from which our illustration is copied, is a case in point. This piece is a complete triumph of *chiaro-oscuro*, and reminds us more than any other production of Van Ostade, of the magical effects of Rembrandt's demi-tints, which the artist has here so successfully imitated. The light pours in a flood of glory through the narrow panes of the casement upon a multiplicity of objects, but the *chevrolet* of the painter, with his canvas containing the sketch upon which he is employed, is in full relief.

#### "A RUSTIC INTERIOR."

Whether or not Adrian Van Ostade ever received any instructions in painting from Rembrandt is quite uncertain, but all connoisseurs agree that, in his wonderfully characteristic interiors, he was more or less influenced by the example of this great genius, and had mastered some of the secrets of his mysterious *chiaro-oscuro*. The light of Rembrandt's pieces has upon us a kind of dramatic effect, and appeals at once to our imagination. His shadows are invested with an awful mystery; they are, as it were, peopled with phantoms. In that mystic union of darkness and of light, in which he so often indulged, there is a sublime poetry to which the simple nature of Van Ostade could never aspire; but

he has borrowed from Rembrandt those vanishing rays of light, those marvellous phases which lend a kind of transparency even to his shadows.

In Van Ostade's picture the ray, *à la* Rembrandt, which pierces the small diamond-pattern panes of the window of the hut, falls on objects trivial and uninteresting in themselves, but redeemed from their insignificance by the halo which genius can shed around wretchedness, want, and rags.

In the Rustic Interior from which our engraving is copied, this Rembrandt ray invests the matter of fact scene with an inexpressible charm. It lights up the figures of the children who are playing with the dog, and it crowns with light the head of the babe, who, supporting its tottering frame on the knees of its grandmother, holds out its chubby and eager little hands for a plaything, which, after a few tantalising moments of uncertainty, will be delivered into its possession. The father and his eldest-born son (who is already of an age to aid in the support of the family) watch with affectionate interest the gradual dawn of intelligence in the babe, as she silently displays by her attitudes the wishes of her mind. The charm of "The Rustic Interior" is its excessive simplicity. The *tableau* is, nevertheless, elaborated with a wonderful attention to detail. Every article of domestic economy in use among the peasant race has been introduced with faithful accuracy—the wicker-work cradle of the infant, the table only half laid out, on which stands the large family jar—an heirloom in this rustic household; and in the centre of the room old granny's spindle, for so many years the chief solace of her age. In the embrasure of the window is the birdcage; over against the wall, on a ruinous kind of rack, some few cups and cracked plates; and higher up, hanging from the beams of a dilapidated ceiling, the basket in which the chickens, which are the chief means of support of this frugal family, are carried to market. On the banister of the ladder-like stairs, which lead to the garret, are some articles of clothing hung out to dry; while lower down in the room is the beer-barrel, which serves the purpose of a family larder, and contains the provisions of our simple household for the next fortnight.

Here and there the smoky walls are adorned with a rough engraving of a popular subject; and thus, even in the humblest dwelling, we have an evidence of the taste for art inherent in the nature of this impassive and phlegmatic people. The interior, however, notwithstanding the careful elaboration of all its details, would have nothing extraordinary about it, and might have been the work of a mere copyist, but for the redeeming light which gives a Van Ostade tone and character to the whole piece. Pouring its mellow rays through the open sashes of the casement, it caresses in its warm and cherishing embrace every animate and inanimate object. The characteristic beauty of this *chiaro-oscuro*, *à la* Rembrandt, is, that it envelops with a kind of mysterious shadow all the portions of the picture which the painter's innate perception of propriety told him were more effective when only dimly visible, while, by way of contrast, it brings into bright and gay relief, from the casement to the cradle, every object upon which it falls, not forgetting the dog, who, if not actually a blood relation of the family, is in the true, and not in the fictitious meaning of the words, "*L'ami de la maison*," if we may be allowed to vary a little that beautiful definition given of the dog by that celebrated French naturalist, Buffon.

The various household utensils and articles of furniture appear, as we before stated, in the light and in the shadow according to the degree of importance attached to them by the artist, or rather we should say, as he thought they contributed to the general harmony of the whole by the sunshine or the shade in which they were placed.

#### "A RUSTIC DANCE."

Van Ostade, in his own peculiar style, was as famous as Berghem was in his. No one ever had a more correct appreciation of what was picturesque and fanciful in nature. Even to such a homely scene as this rural dance he has given a charm and a mystery which captivate the eye of the spectator, and which invest every character he introduces with a peculiar interest. The scene, though intended to be jovial, has all the phlegmatic character of the nation whose orgies it represents. The square built figures of men and women move up and down the floor of this barn-like Dutch *cabaret* to the music of the pipers, in a measure which is anything but graceful. The women are neither in form feature, gait, or garment, such as any but a Dutchman would willingly invite to figure in a

polka, varsoviana, or schottische. Perhaps the dances of the time of Van Ostade did not bring the partners into such close contact with one another. But if they did, it was a matter of little consequence, for the men and women are in every respect admirably matched. Each is worthy of the other, and of none other. We do not, indeed, think that in any other country either Dutchman or Dutch woman could find a helpmeet suitable: such coarse, square-built, sensual, and serious smokers and smokers, are all the genuine inhabitants of the seven United Provinces.

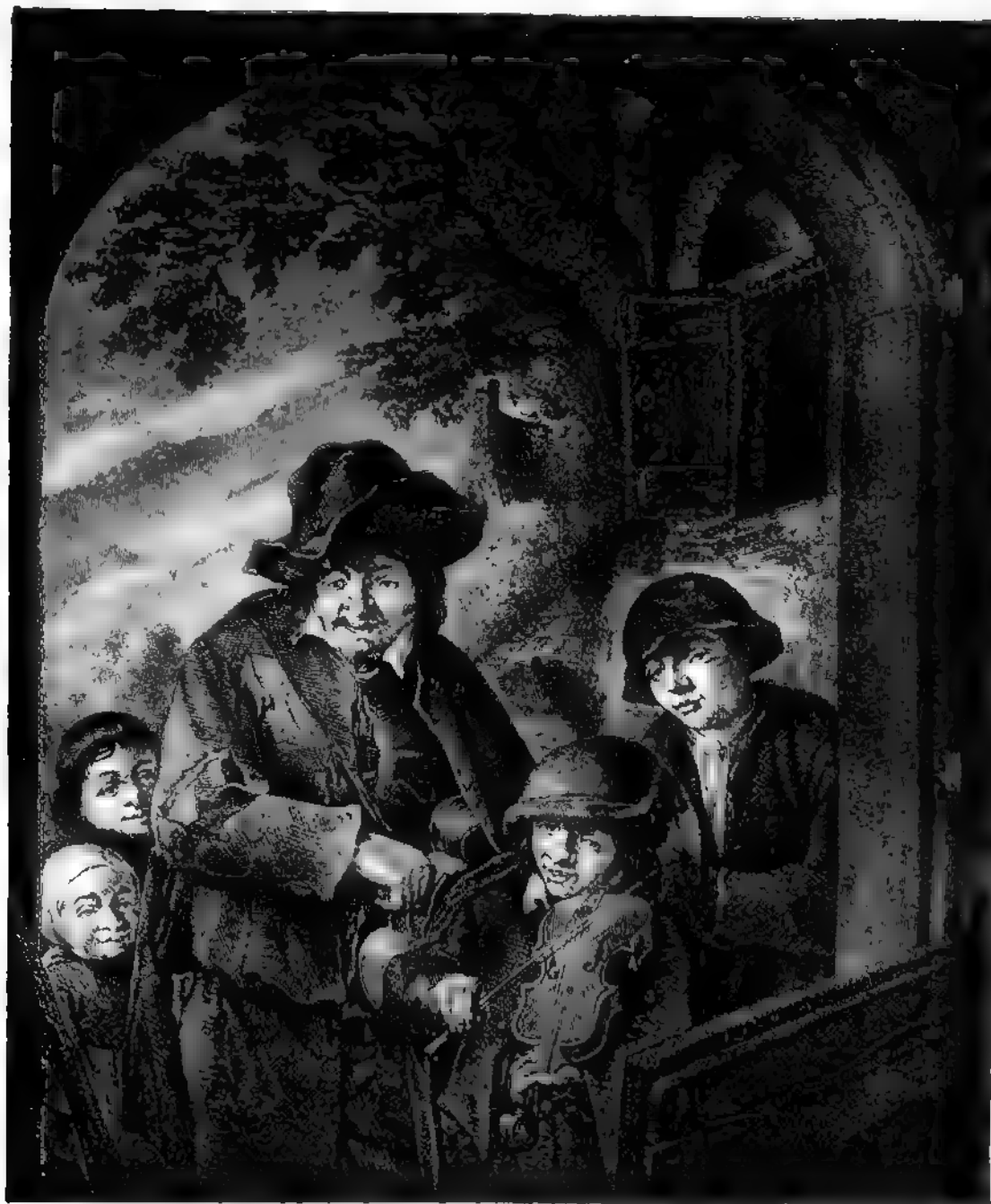


THE HUMP-BACKED FIDDLER. FROM A PAINTING BY VAN OSTADE.

The *chiaro-oscuro* of this picture is one of its chief attractions. It is also very elaborate in its details, and will repay the careful study of all the various objects which are only dimly visible in the demi-tints with which it abounds.

Adam Bartsch, who has bequeathed to us so many interesting particulars concerning Van Ostade, informs us that there are as many as fifty engravings by this celebrated master, without reckoning a





THE ITINERANT MUSICIANS FROM A PAINTING BY VAN OSTADE.

piece of doubtful pedigree. If we then count up the number of exquisite paintings so comprehensive in their minutiae, and so elaborately finished, dispersed through the different galleries of Europe, the number of interiors, of *cabaret* scenes, and of *al-fresco* festivals, besides all the portraits by this great master (for he painted many, and in the best possible style), we shall see that the life of Van Ostade was most laborious and sedentary. It is curious to observe how the phlegmatic and

self-concentrated nature of the people of Holland seems to characterise the works of all her painters. They, to all appearance, breathe an atmosphere of their own, impervious even to the rumour of the events which are happening around them. Both Rembrandt and Van Ostade outlived the whole of the "thirty years' war." The best part of their lives was passed amid the terrors, tumults, and disasters of that protracted struggle, and yet we find that Rembrandt continued during the whole of his professional career immersed in a kind of dreamy reverie, unconscious of all that was going on around him, and a stranger to the external world. From the recesses of his mysterious cell, while the streets resounded with the bustle of war, and the roar of the cannon was heard from afar, he gave existence to his philosophical conceptions, and turned a deaf ear to the tramp of Mansfeld's troopers.

#### "THE DUTCH CABARET."

Van Ostade seems to have been inspired by the genius of Teniers when he painted this "Interior," in which not only the two boon companions, but every little still-life accessory, has a quiet humour, and a quaint simplicity, worthy of the great master of the grotesque.

In spite of the very low places—of the very low life—which the artist has chosen to depict, there is a great drama in this scene. If one of these "jolly fellows" looks, as the "darky" said, like one "drinking for drunkee," the other is (if we may judge by his hard-working, kindly appearance) really "drinking for dry."

The expressions are admirably contrasted. There is a "devil-may-care" expression in the coarse, uncouth face, form, and attitude of him who clutches the pitcher to be ready to replenish the glass he has not yet emptied.

Everything about him is animal, sensual, "of the earth earthy." But the votary of the weed is one who "is na fou'," although there's "jist a drappie in his ee." He may be "elevated" by the contents of that same pitcher, but is not degraded by them too.

His face is admirably expressive of good humour, and that pleasant close to a day of toil which no one need grudge the son of toil, if he knows, as our friend of the pipe evidently does,

"How to be merry and wise."

The drawing of this picture is singularly good—carefully and highly finished; and the adroit disposition of light and shadow is not unworthy of the great master of the *chiaro-oscuro*, Rembrandt.

How the lambent lustre flickers on the glorious cheek and bottle nose of the toper, lights up the folds of his paper cap, brings out the rotundity of the pitcher, gleams along the stem and bowl of the pipe, plays along the edges of the coarse deal table, touches the rim of the tobacco-box, is reflected from the half-hidden goblet, then flickers on the mild eye of the cobbler, sports with the crow's feet at his temples, lights up his jolly but not yet bottle nose, and marks out the folds of his leathern apron, the ashes of his pipe, and the moulding of his old Dutch chair! The semi-gloom in which the room is wrapped is artistically devised to throw out the rough figures and the rude furniture—and the picture is decidedly a *chef-d'œuvre* in the Teniers' style.

#### "THE HUMP-BACKED FIDDLER."

This picture brings the scene and the country vividly before us, and so little have the habits, dwellings, and costume of the Dutch altered with the march of intellect, and the progress of events, that just such nooks and people might still be found among the *meinherrs* of the Low Countries, listening to just such a hump-backed fiddler.

The ruined arch, beyond which is seen the turreted château; the old, ungainly dwelling, half cottage, half inn, with its clumsy, creaking sign; the lounging boer, pipe in hand; the Dutch vrow, lovely only in his eyes, and with one pledge in her arms, while another, hoop in hand, stops to listen to the rude minstrelsy of the itinerant fiddler,—all these have a truth, a nationality, which make these pictures "historical subjects," in that the history of the domestic life of a great nation is faithfully represented in them.

The Dutch vrow is not lovely, but she is true to life, and is a very fit mate for the broad-shouldered, phlegmatic, boosing, smoking, clod-hopping boer, who, all animal as he is, yet suspends the

"delightful task" of obscuring with smoke the little intellect he possesses, to listen to the strains of that poor pensioner of the poor, the hump-backed fiddler.

There is nothing of the cherub of Raphael in the babe on the vrow's bosom, or of the cupid of Giorgione in the urchin with the hoop, but in each the father sees "a chip of the old block"—the broad-built, strong-limbed, phlegmatic Dutchman, in whom industry without ambition, valour without enthusiasm, love without poetry, and virtue without heroism, are as remarkable to-day as they were when Van Ostade conceived the picture of "The Hump-backed Fiddler," and will be the same while the Dutch boer and the Dutch vrow lead the same life, and jog on in the same routine. Their ancestors loved, and trained up children (like themselves) in the way in which, from time immemorial, Dutch wisdom has decided the Dutch should go.

No one has painted pictures more thoroughly impressed with nationality than Adrian Van Ostade. Connoisseurs have dwelt much upon the duality of style of which he was equally master; one manner remarkable for boldness and breadth, the other for a delicacy and minuteness of finish, surpassing that in use among miniature painters.

Of this beautiful and captivating manner there is a brilliant specimen in the Louvre, called "The Schoolmaster." Perhaps it is not a compliment to such a genius to compare a work of his to a *chef-d'œuvre* of enamel painting; but yet nothing else can convey any idea of the exquisite and transparent polish Van Ostade occasionally lavished on his smaller pieces, and which has made some Flemish critics declare that some secret art beyond the exquisite finish of his touch produced the effect to which we allude.

It is reported of George III. that he used to wind up an eulogium on West, by saying that his pictures were as smooth as glass! The same *naïve critique* would apply to those gems of Van Ostade's which contrast so forcibly with other masterpieces of his remarkable for beauties of a directly opposite nature. It required no little versatility of genius to excel alike in all that is deftly small and proudly great. Yet this triumph Van Ostade achieved.

#### "ITINERANT MUSICIANS."

Like all the great masters of their art, Van Ostade was a studious and most discriminating observer of human nature in all its different phases. At once simple and profound, a painter by intuition, and yet perfect in all the secrets of his art, original in his tone, and yet skilled in all the mysteries of colour, he was never more successful than when he chose for his canvas some rural subject. In his village scenes he displays at once all the rare qualifications for which he was famous in his calling. In the painting of the "Itinerant Musicians," from which our engraving is taken, we see a wandering minstrel eliciting from his cracked and creaking fiddle some notes of a hackneyed and popular air. His dress consists of the cast-off and faded disguise of some tragedy king of a country theatre. The battered hat which shades his wrinkled and weather-beaten physiognomy is surmounted with a plume plucked from the wings of chanticleer. By his side a young votary of the art, whose features express all the pride and self-sufficiency of the leader of the band of the Italian Opera, is accompanying his father on an instrument of minor dimensions. The sneering, sarcastic, and saucy expression of the old ballad-monger, sufficiently indicates the spirit of his catches. He is importing into the village the morals of the metropolis; and he is giving point to the broad humour of the ballad he is trollying by the mimicry of his attitude and features. The effect he produces on his motley auditors is described with that happy facility and fidelity which distinguish all Van Ostade's productions. Behind him a lover of good cheer is so convulsed with laughter at the humour of the song, that he finds it impossible to maintain the perpendicular, and sinks overcome on the stone bench at his side. Of the two children to the right of the minstrel, the one is gaping in idiot wonder at the sounds which convey no meaning to his mind, while the other, whose face beams with intelligence, is gazing with admiring eyes on the young musician, whose precocious talent he is eager to emulate.

The grouping of the whole *tableau* is most artistic, and will remind the spectator, if ever he has tarried for any length of time in a quiet country hamlet where still may be traced some lingering remains of primæval simplicity, of many a similar scene. Without a thorough knowledge of

the human heart, without a delicate appreciation of the motives which influence and actuate that complicated piece of machinery—the human mind, the painter could never have elaborated a composition so perfect in all its details, or have described, in the varying expression of the several faces, the effect upon different characters of the minstrel's melody. But great as is the merit of the design, and artistic as is the filling up of the piece, the chief attraction of the picture consists in the



THE GAME OF GALET FROM A PAINTING BY VAN 'T HAGE.

harmony of the tints, and the exquisite management of the light. A celebrated connoisseur, in his criticism of this *chef-d'œuvre*, remarks:—"The scene of this picture is shaded by a wide branching tree, and by the leafy stalks of the hop plant climbing up the poles. The light steals through the branches, and, falling on the wall in the centre of the *tableau*, spreads from object to object—sunshine gradually mellowing into shade. The general tone of the picture is bright. The transparency of



PAUL POTTER FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF

the foliage, however, invests all the objects with a greenish hue, which is the result of the leafy canopy through which the rays penetrate. This curious tint, which is so characteristic of Van Ostade's colouring, is, in this case, a great beauty, as it borrows its hue from the surrounding foliage. The walls, the door, the country around, have all a natural tone, and are remarkable for the delicacy of the shading. They are, in fact, as regards this style of painting, the very perfection of art."



#### "THE GAME OF GALET."

This is a game which has no exact counterpart in England, though it may, perhaps, have been the origin of our game of bagatelle or billiards. The ball is impelled by the hand along the deal board, and not by a cue, as in the two latter games. The painting, from which our engraving is taken, is valuable from the life-like picture it gives of a Dutch *cabaret* of the seventeenth century, and of the appearance and manners of the customers. The management of the light in "The Game of Galet" is a triumph of artistic skill. It is warm, penetrating, and

cherishing. The dilapidated facing of the antiquated *cabaret* at the entrance to which the Dutch boers are boozing; the grouping of the different figures; the lazy kind of attention which the spectator is bestowing on the progress of the game; the design of the thatch which shields the galet board from the effects of the sun and rain; all give evidence of the amount of care and observation bestowed upon minute details by this accomplished artist.

Van Ostade had a peculiar touch, which was one of the most precious characteristics of his style. How often, in scanning the art treasures of the Louvre, has the discriminating connoisseur been struck with admiration of some small production of Adrian Van Ostade's, of which the subject was possibly nothing more important than a Dutch merchant reading a letter. So wonderfully, however, has the painter caught the expression of his model, and such a history of hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, doubts and certainties, has he managed to extract from the varying gaze of the reader, that the attention of the spectator is riveted upon the piece. And what may not that letter contain which he clutches so tightly, and which his eyes seem to devour, as they read it? He is evidently some enterprising planter or coloniser, who has just received advices of the progress of his settlement in a distant hemisphere. Perchance, some disaster has overtaken his argosy, and he has now just learned the particulars of the event. The recipient of the letter is, however, a Dutchman to the backbone, and reads, with impassive stoicism, accounts that would blanch any cheek but his. Nevertheless, beneath that calm exterior there is an under current of sentiment and feeling which wrinkles the brow, furrows the cheek, and dims, prematurely, the brightness of his eye. But the native dignity of the Dutchman is all the while unruffled.

Adrian Van Ostade died at Amsterdam in 1685, at the advanced age of seventy-five. We say advanced, for although seventy-five is for a less sedentary career comparatively young, painters seldom have attained so great a degree of longevity. Most of Van Ostade's contemporaries died long before the time of life to which he was allowed to reach. He had for his pupil his brother Isaac, one of the most extraordinary landscape painters of any age or country. Critics and connoisseurs have affected to think him inferior to his master, Descamps; but this we attribute rather to an insufficient acquaintance with the beauties of his masterpieces—which a golden haze and a rustic poetry of conception render quite unapproachable—than to any inferiority in the artist.

Among other imitators or pupils of Adrian Van Ostade, we may mention Cornelius Dusart, Cornelius Bega, and David Ryckaert. All these artists borrowed from their master the conversational style of tableau. From him they learned to paint to the life, the exterior of the labourers' hut, the rural pastime, and the various emotions which actuate the peasants' life.

#### HIS MERITS.

Adrian Van Ostade has often been compared with Teniers: "But Teniers," say the critics, "was better skilled in the grouping of his figures, and superior to Van Ostade in the conception of his whole piece." Our artist, indeed, was in the habit of placing his point of light so high, that his interiors have sometimes rather an awkward appearance, and would be ridiculous if he had not known how to fill the vacant space with the minutiae of detail he so admirably introduced. The colouring of Teniers is clear, lively, and silvery; whereas that of Van Ostade has, with the same amount of transparency, a vigour, a warmth, and a uniformity which we find in no other painter. Van Ostade economises his light in the way that Rembrandt had done before him. Under his management it penetrates with a mellowed ray through leafy bowers, or steals into the peasant's cot, through the tissues of ivy which shade the casement of his cabin; and in this way we are captivated by the kind of mysterious charm which this light possesses. Teniers, on the other hand, brings out his figures into the full light of day; and, without doing violence to his shadows, or in any way interfering with his artistic conception, he gives to his whole piece the interest and the breath of life. In copying nature, skilfully and faithfully, he infuses into his whole scene a spirit of love, laughter, and liveliness. His rural festivals are remarkable—in the beaming eyes of his peasants, their joyousness, their excitement, their anger, and their rows—for the variety of character they represent. Every age, every condition of life has its representatives; and in the same piece with the reeling peasant, brutalised by his debauchery, we see figures which redeem the character of the festival, by the dignity of their carriage and the superiority of their dress. Van Ostade, on the contrary, limits his choice of subjects

to those Dutch peasants who, in their tipsy revels, only represent all that is most degrading and grotesque in human nature. Emeric David remarks of Van Ostade that he is a satirist, who exaggerates the natural hideousness of his subjects, to render them more funny and ridiculous. This is scarcely fair. It is Teniers, and not Van Ostade, who is the satirist. If you wish to amuse yourself at the expense of the peasant race, enter unceremoniously a *cabaret* with Teniers, and you will see peasant life in its most humorous light; but, if you wish to make yourself really well acquainted with the manners of the lower classes in Holland, you cannot do better than study that little masterpiece of Adrian Ostade, in which he has given a faithful picture of the entrance to a village *cabaret*.

## PAUL POTTER.



SOME Dutch painters, said a French writer of eminence, "have given to nature an indescribable language which touches the heart, excites the imagination, and superinduces a pleasing reverie that cheats the world of half its worldliness." Theirs is a magic power which can hold us for hours in the contemplation of subjects the most commonplace and even homely in appearance. What is there in a meadow, through which meanders a brook, fringed with willows; a valley through which flows a mountain torrent, swollen by the storm, of which we still see on the horizon, now blazing with the light of the setting sun, the last traces; or a fisherman's hut, on a desert shore, at the foot of a naked rock, with a stormy sea in the distance, and far over the waters a white and swan like sail almost buried between the crests of two mountainous waves;—what is there in all this to exercise over our imaginations so powerful a sway? It is not the mere combination of these simple and even uninviting objects which interests the spectator; it is the manner in which the artist has treated them—it is his inspiration which bears us along with him, and inoculates us with his own enthusiasm.

In the animal creations of Paul Potter, homely and domestic as they are, we see plainly developed the economy of their life; each is, in fact, a representative type of his whole race.

Descamps informs us that Paul Potter, the celebrated animal painter, was a scion of the house of Egmond, through his grandmother. His grandfather was collector of revenues in Upper and Lower Swalve, and his ancestors had filled the most important civic offices in the town of Enkhuysen, where Paul Potter was born, in the year 1625. He was the son of Peter Potter, a painter of very moderate pretensions, who, a short time after the birth of his son, removed to Amsterdam for the purpose of obtaining the right of citizenship there.

Paul Potter had at first no other master than his father, whom he greatly surpassed in merit as soon as he had acquired the first rudiments of drawing. Descamps tells us that he was a prodigy of genius. When he was fourteen years old he was already a master of his art; and his works, even at that early age, rank with the productions of the greatest painters of the time. After an attentive study of the *chefs d'œuvre* with which Amsterdam abounds, Paul Potter left the paternal roof, and took up his abode at La Haye. His object in this change was to secure a greater amount of liberty than he enjoyed at home, with full licence to follow the dictates of his own genius.

At La Haye he lived next door to Nicolas Balkenende, the architect, who had acquired a certain amount of fame in that town. This Balkenende had a lovely daughter, and Paul Potter, who had for "the beautiful" all the enthusiastic admiration of the artist, soon became deeply enamoured of this fair enchantress. The young damsel, flattered by the attentions of the painter, encouraged his suit; but when Paul asked of her father his consent to their marriage, the Dutch architect contemptuously replied, that he would never give his daughter to an artist who painted nothing but animals. The lover, however, nothing dismayed at his rebuff, enlisted in his cause the wealthy and influential

picture-fanciers, who appreciated his talent, and who already offered large sums for his animals. The architect, proud as he was, was soon made to feel that an alliance with a man so renowned as Paul Potter, was rather an honour than a discredit, although he *did* paint nothing but animals. The architect saw his error, and graciously repaired it by giving Potter his daughter in marriage, who

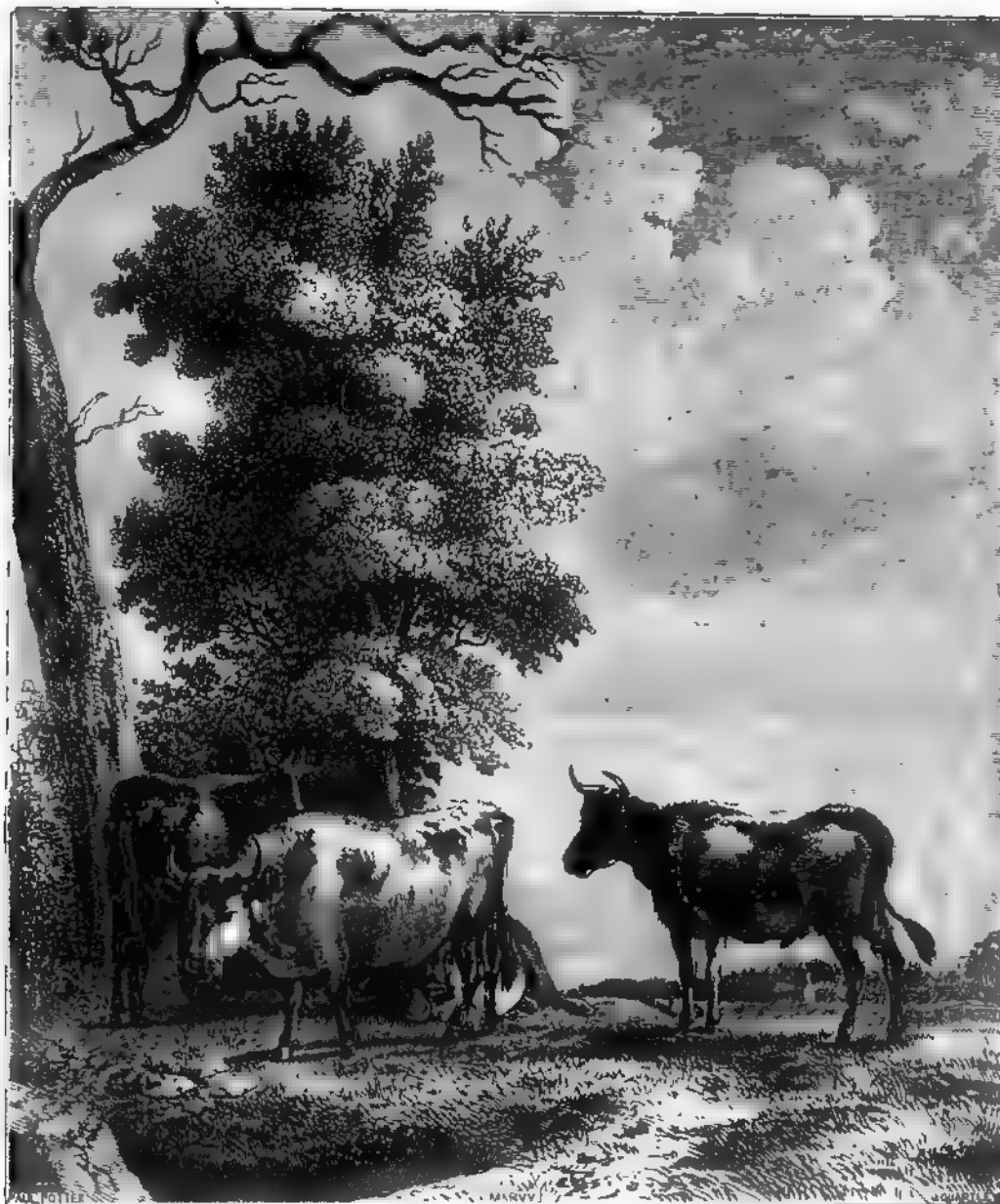


THE COW AND HER SHADOW. FROM A PAINTING BY PAUL POTTER.

forthwith installed himself in a magnificent house, which he made a perfect temple of the muses. He was courted by all the principal magnates of the land ; wits and sages, foreign ambassadors, and even the Prince of Orange himself made of the atelier of Paul Potter a kind of rendezvous, which the artist enlivened by his wit, his learning, his agreeable conversation, and his refined and capti-



vating manners. Everywhere welcomed as the great lion of the day, the artist, instead of diminishing, enhanced the importance of his father-in-law, the architect.



THE PASTURE GROUND. FROM A PAINTING BY PAUL POTTER.

#### HIS PORTRAIT.

If the great painter of animals was as good-looking as he is represented in the portrait from which our engraving is copied, it is not at all surprising that the architect's daughter encouraged his attentions, even at the risk of incurring her father's displeasure. The eyes, which are large and expressive, have that peculiar slope which gives a character of archness and humour to the face eminently attractive. The chiselled chin and the curved lip denote a determination and manliness which excite the

admiration, and even the confidence, of the weaker and more dependent sex. In the *tout ensemble* of the face there is a look of self-sufficiency which proves that the painter, although in the prime of life when this likeness was taken, had already acquired that reliance on his own powers which is one of the great sources of success in life. But however prepossessing Paul Potter may have been in appearance (and that he was handsome there can be no doubt, from the portrait before us), he had in the reputation he had already achieved among men a far greater claim to the admiration of the *beau-sexe*. There is, indeed, nothing so irresistible with women as fame amongst men; and the reason of their preference for those who have already distinguished themselves in the world is, that they know that men, who are far less the creatures of impulse than their gentle helpmates, are niggards of their praise, and only lavish it upon those who possess, in an extraordinary degree, that manly vigour of mind or person which women prize so highly, because it is so great a contrast to their own confiding helplessness.

In addition to the *prestige* of his name and the graces of his person, Paul Potter had those of conversation and manner, which, if we may believe the old adage—

“That man, indeed, is no man  
Who, with his tongue, can't win a woman”—

did more for him in his suit than all his other advantages put together. He had received a first-rate education, and had, moreover, from nature, that invaluable *savoir-faire* which enabled him to turn it to the best account.

No country in the world offers greater facilities for a painter of animals than Holland—the alluvial soil produces the most splendid pastures, everywhere intersected and watered by fertilising canals—nowhere in Europe could a painter, in the style of Paul Potter, have found living models in richer abundance or greater perfection. Nowhere has nature supplied a greater variety in the colour and coats of the herds of kine and flocks of sheep, who graze upon that vast and verdant meadow, which the tourist in Holland sees spread on all sides, and to an illimitable extent around him.

It has been remarked by a great French naturalist that nature contrasts the colour of the animals with that of the country around them; and nowhere has the truth of this observation been better verified than in Holland. The landscape is monotonous and melancholy; the sky, gray, cold, and cheerless; and yet the coats of the cattle are bright, rich, and varied. Nature seems to have intended that the variegated hues of the cattle should compensate for the tiring sameness of the country. Whether this is really the case or not, it is quite certain that every traveller in Holland is struck with admiration at the beautiful and leopard-like spots of the horned cattle. These are spread over a ground sometimes gray, sometimes red, and very often, over a coat of milky white, we see, scattered here and there (with an effect exceedingly pleasing to the eye), auburn spots, shining with a soft and golden light.

Even if the colours of the coat of any individual cow may, when taken apart from the herd, blend but badly with each other, the animal, when seen in conclave, will harmonise with the rest of the flock. In the immediate neighbourhood of La Haye Paul Potter found plenty of models for imitation; and his great object was to copy them, unperceived, while they were chewing the cud under a tree, or sleeping through the heat of mid-day. For this purpose he never went forth without taking with him a blank copy-book, in which he drew sketches of everything he thought worthy of his attention. The cattle were his chief study; other things, such as a tree, a plant, a stile, a quickset hedge, or a shepherd, he struck off in a moment without bestowing upon them the same earnest attention. But cows, sheep, and goats were the children of his fancy; and no Egyptian ever spent more time in the contemplation of Serapis, nor Hindoo in the adoration of the sacred bull, than did Paul Potter in the study of his favourite cattle.

#### “THE COW AND HER SHADOW.”

We are not in the habit of associating any idea of feminine coquetry with that ruminating, sedate, respectable being, so full of the milk of kindness—the domestic cow. And though Paul Potter, with a touch of that humour universal among artists of all descriptions, has chosen to call his admirable picture of the cow standing at the edge of a stream, which reflects her form, “*La Vache qui se Mire*,” we are disposed to acquit “the milky mother of the herd” of anything approaching the

feeling that animated Eve when she first discovered that she was beautiful, by the aid of that primeval mirror of the new-made world, the fountain. There is no sparkle of gratified vanity in the large, soft, velvet eye of Paul Potter's vaccine heroine. She is the *beau-ideal* of a good, serviceable cow. The line of beauty is, as Hogarth said, a curve, but she is all angles; her attitude is true to nature. There is nothing about her so human as vanity, no symptom that her own *reflexion* pleases or excites her. We love her all the better for being simply and solely what nature intended her to be, a cow! Great nursing mother of all the sons and daughters of men! We can almost fancy, as we gaze upon her, that from her dewy muzzle, softer than velvet, steams forth that balmy breath, sweeter than new-mown hay or fresh culled violets, and redolent, not merely of "joy and youth," but of green fields, clear pebbled brooks, daisies, buttercups; the far sweet country, childhood, with its glad realities; youth, with its wild dreams,—all these come crowding back upon the heart as we gaze on Paul Potter's cow by the stream.

The distribution of this picture is very good; the trees are well placed, well drawn, their foliage is light, graceful, and with something in the distinctness of the leaf, anticipative of pre-Raphaelitism. The water is pellucid and admirably chequered by the sky, and animated by the objects it reflects. There are two other cows, a milkmaid, a man, and a dog, to complete the group. But they are merely accessories. The *prima donna*—the centre figure—is the cow, gazing in her glass with a composure the whole female world would do well to emulate. The other cows take as little interest in her charms as the fair generally do when there is no object to be gained, no heart to be won, no male flirt to throw the apple of discord among those who are always *friends* till man makes them *rivals*. The milkmaid is not remarkable for beauty of person, or grace of attitude; but if "handsome is that handsome does," we may not pronounce her ugly; for she is scrubbing out her milk-pail with right good-will—the more zealous perhaps, that the eye of the master is on her, so that she may be, perhaps, but an eye-servant after all. There is a great reality about the distance—flat, formal, and thoroughly Dutch as it is. We can believe that the rude sketch of this picture was made by Paul Potter from the scene itself, during one of those rambles he was so constantly taking, sketch-book in hand, in his own quiet, but fertile country, and that the cow by the stream, as it is certainly to the life, was from the life also.

#### "THE PASTURE."

And good pasture too, we should imagine, judging by the sleek, well-to-do look of the principal figure, who seems almost as "rounded" and oppressed as an alderman after a civic feast.

This is a picture suggestive of comfortable reflections and pleasurable emotions. If it is painful to see the beasts of the field, all so capable of animal enjoyment, starved, hunted, beaten, and oppressed, a living reproach to the cruelty and sordid avarice of man, it is refreshing and soothing to view the creatures so essential to our comfort, gainers by the system of mutual accommodation, and living witnesses of the "wisdom of mercy." The scenery of this picture is soft and sylvan, and the contrast of the green tree, and its bare and blighted neighbour, suggestive of bright youth and desolate old age.

There was a good deal of the poetic element in the mind of this singular genius, who, with that passionate energy so often found in those predestined to an early death, worked night and day at his great art, as if he knew how soon he would be able to work no more. It is recorded of him that he painted all day, engraved a great part of the night, and never even strolled out for the recreation of a ramble without his pencil and portfolio in his hand.

#### "HORSES AT BAIT."

Although cows were his favourite study, no artist has ever drawn horses more naturally or more artistically than Paul Potter. His models, however, were not the prancing steeds of Wouvermans, or those fiery Andalusian chargers upon which Vandyck was fond of mounting his loyal cavaliers. The model that Paul Potter chose for his pieces was the patient, useful cart-horse, powerful and sleek, such as we see him in the picture from which our engraving is copied. The Dutch draught-horse is somewhat different from the celebrated Flanders breed. But the cross with the English stock served to give greater height and size of bone to our own original heavy-set cart-horse. The scene of the "Horses at Bait" is highly characteristic of the country in which it is taken.

## "THE MEADOW."

This is a meadow that makes one almost envy the cattle, who look so real, and seem to be so thoroughly enjoying the pastoral beauties. We fancy that the sun has just peeped from behind the light volumes of cloud that are rolling over the deep, deep blue of an autumnal sky. On the soft and emerald sod, from which we can imagine that,

"Glistering in the freshened field,  
The snowy mushroom springs,"

the bold, masterly shadow of the ox finely contrasts the sunshine sleeping on the grass. There is a middle distance, very unpretending, but of rare merit, and a farm-house, half hidden among trees, where we can fancy the home virtues nestle, and Industry, with her rosy daughter, Competence, resides.



HORSES AT HAY. FROM A PAINTING BY PAUL POTTER.

The inhabitants of the meadow seem to be bachelors; and one of these lords of the brute creation, perhaps finding little to solace or amuse him in the company of the male sex, is straining his neck over the stile, and seems to be bleating for some

"Fair spirit for his minister."

Perhaps he espies the slender form of some sleek heifer in the fields beyond! The trunk of the tree is bold and effective, and the stile is one over which a schoolboy would delight to vault.

It was a pity that Paul Potter, in a wish to imitate the great masters, who at that time honoured Amsterdam with their presence, tried, in spite of the brilliant success of his small pastoral subjects, to adopt a larger, bolder style. He seems to have fancied that by painting cows and bulls the size of life,

he could give to his cattle-pieces the dignity and importance of the great historical pictures at that time rendering his contemporaries so illustrious. But how was it possible even for Paul Potter's genius to reconcile the spectator to colossal animals, whose huge horns touched the frame, and who could produce no illusion when not seen from that "distance" which "lends enchantment to the view!" The charm of cattle-pieces consists in the images they conjure up. The stalled ox is interesting only to the agriculturist and stock-breeder.

It is true that, at La Haye, one of these enormous pictures is exhibited as a *chef-d'œuvre*. But to the eye of taste it does not answer the expectations excited by the undeserved praises of tourists and penny-a-liners. The touch is bold and masterly, we own; and the animals have a startling reality about them; but the *tout ensemble* is sadly deficient in tone and effect. The eye is offended, and even shocked, by these huge proportions, so unexpected and so unusual in subjects of this kind; and the



THE MEADOW, FROM A PAINTING BY PAUL POTTER.

great precision of Paul Potter, so admirable in his smaller pieces, is cold and ineffective on a larger scale. A more dashing style is requisite in a picture of such gigantic proportions; more force, more fire, and some rare effect of *chiaro-oscuro*, by which Cuyp or Rembrandt would have insured the success of such a bold attempt. These remarks are even more applicable to that great "Bear Hunt," exhibited at the Amsterdam Museum, and which is certainly the least meritorious of Paul Potter's works. Ruysdael had the art of representing an infinity of depth and distance on a canvas a foot square. M. Thore, speaking of Paul Potter's colossal animals, said, "Albert Kuyp represented creatures of much more gigantic proportions on a very small panel." The size of the canvas has nothing to do with that of the objects depicted. The smallest figure Michael Angelo ever painted is grander than your most majestic forms. Benasmito engraved on the hilt of a sword battles, worth all those two leagues of warlike pieces, exhibited at Versailles.

## "THE BULL."

Our artist was fond of representing the three-quarter view of his subject, as he fancied that the face of the animal was more expressive when only partially seen. The bull in our engraving is a noble creature, and might have stood for the model of that glorious animal into which Jupiter transformed himself when he wooed and won the too credulous Europa. The admixture of sheep and goats with his ruminant animals is one of the characteristics of our artist's style, and creates a pleasing variety. His horned models are, however, always in full relief, and arrest the attention of the spectator. In the colouring of their coats he applies all the resources of his genius, and upon the harmony of the tints he bestows all his attention, care, and patience. Every shade and every line are the result of long and arduous study. The curve of the horns, the motion of the eyelids, upon which so much of the fierceness or gentleness of the animal depends; the size and slope of the ears, the way in which the coat lies on the back, and the places in which it rises in rough and round tangles, all these minutiae, together with the faithful representation of the dewlap and of the extremities, never before described by any artist with so much accuracy, distinguish Paul Potter from every other master in his own peculiar style, of any age or any country. In the engraving of "The Bull," how admirably the artist has drawn the line of demarcation between the male and the female of the same race. In the cow the face is long, the forehead open, and the eyebrows slightly marked; while in the bull, the head is short and bristling, the expression fierce, the neck of a breadth and thickness quite remarkable, the chest heavy, but the shoulders small, and the hinder portions still smaller, in comparison with the size of the animal.

But if Paul Potter's genius failed him in the bold attempt of introducing the humble denizens of the field and farmyard large as life, and on a huge canvas, what success did it not enable him to achieve in those small pictures, of which the dimensions were suited to the simplicity of the subject? How strikingly did he develop in them all the powers of his pencil, all the refinement of his mind, all the feelings of his heart!

No one can gaze on those exquisite pictures of rural scenery and animal life, painted two hundred years ago by Paul Potter, without admiring their truth, their humour, and their delicate effects of light and shade. But few, we trust, have examined these *chefs-d'œuvre* without appreciating their sentiment, and being conscious of a heart, a soul. A distinguished connoisseur said of Paul Potter's smaller cattle-pieces, "Other artists have produced cows, oxen, sheep, well drawn, well painted. Paul Potter alone has caught their individuality, their expression, their instincts." We admire the flocks and herds of Berghem, of Van de Velde, and of Karl Dujardin; but those of Paul Potter not only delight our minds, they touch our hearts. Paul Potter studied animals closely, their anatomy, their habits, their tempers, their attitudes—so eloquent of their passions and emotions.

## "LANDSCAPE, WITH COWS."

This is another bull scene. The short-horned hero is one of those black warriors, with a white forehead, which Potter was so fond of introducing among his speckled cattle. In the expression of his face there is something very fierce and vicious. His eyes glare, his mouth is half open, as though he was muttering some taurine note of defiance. Woe to those who are within reach of his mighty wrath. The trunk of the pollard willow would offer but small protection against so formidable a foe. The placid cow, however, more composed and less *aux petits soins* than most wives would be in the presence of such a tyrannical mate, is ruminating, really, and not metaphorically, at her ease; while the welkin roars with the aimless, impotent bellowings of the furious bull. Another of the tyrant's wives—for, like Brigham Young, our swarthy bull is a great polygamist—is slowly and sedately wending her way to some refreshing watering-place, or to some more abundant pasturage. The landscape is a faithful picture of the country in the neighbourhood of La Haye, level, monotonous, and uninteresting, with a few barren sand hills in the distance. In this respect, however, the neighbourhood of La Haye is only on a level with the greater part of northern and central Europe; and the Dutch need not blush for the flatness of their country, when they can retaliate on their disparagers, by declaring that between Paris and St. Petersburg there is not a single hill.

It seems at the first blush to be a mystery how an artist, whose productions are so redolent of calmness, meditation, and peace, could have successfully carried on his profession among the wits, the worldlings, the wiseacres, the princes, and plenipotentiaries who thronged his *atelier*. The interruptions of society must, we should think, have jarred with the conception of those types of peace and retirement—his pastoral scenes. But those who see deeper than the mere surface of things are aware how much apparent contradiction there is in the nature of the genuine artist; how the man who in solitude is the most melancholy being in the world, becomes at once the gayest of the gay, when surrounded by congenial spirits who sympathise with his tastes, and appreciate his talent. Paul Potter was one of those volatile beings whose *accès* of gaiety and depression were always in extremes.

With a ready wit, an irresistible power of repartee, and an enviable fluency of speech, he was always the most amusing and popular man of the company. If his witticisms were occasionally broad, and his humour objectionable on the score of refinement, we must rather blame the age and country in which he lived than the tendency of his own mind. The proof which his enemies adduce of his want of proper delicacy and tact is, in reality, only indicative of the great simplicity of his character. The Dowager Princess Emily, Countess of Zolms, had ordered of Potter a painting for the chimney-piece of one of the most magnificent rooms in the state palace. Paul Potter, who was anxious to surpass, on this occasion, all his former achievements, painted in the foreground of a lovely, laughing landscape, a cow in a most objectionable attitude. A courtier, who stood high in the favour of the princess, considered the piece, notwithstanding its acknowledged merits, ill-suited for the occasion, and by no means a proper object for a princess to have constantly before her eyes. The princess herself was of the same opinion, and the picture was in consequence returned to the artist. But it did not long remain on hand; for the anecdote connected with it having got wind, picture-fanciers contended with each other for the possession of this cow, which, having thus become famous, was a source of far greater profit to the artist than he had originally anticipated; and has figured successively in all the principal galleries of the Low Countries. It was for a long time an heirloom in the family of Mussart, who had filled the office of Sheriff of Amsterdam, and passed at length into the hands of Van Biesuin, who sold it for two thousand florins—which is more than £80—to Van Hock. This picture-fancier placed the famous cow in his cabinet just opposite to a masterpiece of Gerard Douw, which was in every way a complete contrast to it.

The forest of La Haye, which, on account of its beauty, was saved from that wholesale destruction of life and property in which Philip II. delighted to indulge, was one of the favourite retreats of Paul Potter. He has introduced the wood into many of his most famous pictures, and especially into that celebrated piece called "A View of the Forest of La Haye," which fetched twenty-seven thousand francs at the sale of the pictures of the Duke de Choiseul. At the entrance of the wood are a pack of hounds led by a huntsman, and ready braced for the chase. Through the openings of the trees horsemen are discovered passing by, together with a few cows driven by a herdsman. This piece is, strictly speaking, a landscape. We mean that the figures are subordinate in importance to the large trees under which they are seen. Landscape painting was not, however, Paul Potter's *forte*; and artists who envied his success say, that in his landscapes there is a most disagreeable monotony of background. Such a criticism, however, when applied to the works of a painter of animals, is unfair and irrelevant. Paul Potter may not have the fire, the inspiration, the rich and fertile fancy of Berghem; he cannot, like Berghem, throw a mellow ray over a landscape, rendered picturesque by time-hallowed ruins scattered here and there; but he is far more natural, truthful, and national. He passed the whole of his life in the damp and level country in which he first drew his breath, and could not, therefore, borrow from the sun of an Italian sky that warm and golden ray which gives so much life and beauty to the noble landscapes of Berghem. He had never seen with his own eyes any other canopy than the gray and watery skies of his own province; and the only landscape on which he had gazed was a long and level plain, bounded by the horizon, and dotted hither and thither with the pointed steeples of the churches of the Dutch villages. This sinking horizon and this pale and unpromising sky he has reproduced faithfully in his pictures, without any disparagement or embellishment of his own.

Paul Potter's love-match could not have turned out a happy one, for although the beautiful and youthful Adrienne Balkenende, whom he selected as his help-mate, possessed those external charms

which are essential in the "model wife" of a painter, the rich casket did not contain that only pearl of price—a virtuous heart.

Vain, inconsiderate, coquettish, fond of dress, pleasure, and admiration, the idol of Paul Potter's fancy was not content with the sovereignty of her lawful and loyal dominion. She tried to please the great and gay of that time and place, all of whom frequented her husband's studio.



THE BULL. FROM A PAINTING BY PAUL POTTER.

Vanity led, as it so often does, to the sacrifice of virtue. Her husband discovered that she was faithless, by a device borrowed from the old mythology, and not exactly fit to be recorded here. At any rate it exposed the false wife and treacherous guest to universal contempt and ridicule, frightened away all the other gay butterflies who had delighted to hover round this now blasted rose, and brought





21.1.17.17.

h. f. 11

LANDSCAPE WITH COWS. FROM A PAINTING BY PAUL POTTER.

her, abashed and penitent, to her senses, and to her husband's feet, to find, strange to say, forgiveness there! He must indeed have loved this frail flower, to have taken it, disgraced and sullied as it was, again to his bosom.

"*On pardonne tant qu'on aime,*" says the lightest of French maximists, but perhaps Paul Potter's

sublime forgiveness might have been traced to that perennial fount of pardon, a CHRISTIAN SPIRIT. Perhaps, with a prophetic sense (not uncommon in those destined to die young) that he was soon to stand himself at the judgment seat of his God, he wished to be able to say, "Forgive me my trespasses, as I have forgiven hers." Perhaps he thought of his great Master's sentence, when a similar culprit cowered in the dust before him, "Go, and sin no more." Of course, after the public exposure and detection of his wife's frailty, La Haye was no pleasant residence for the guilty wife and injured husband; they were, it seems, as they would have been anywhere else, in common phrase, "the talk of the town."

They took refuge in Amsterdam, where Paul Potter's own family lived, and where he was warmly welcomed by "Tulp, the Burgomaster," who coveted all his productions; and, indeed, almost all the *chefs-d'œuvre* of Paul Potter were purchased by this wealthy amateur, and adorned his choice collection.

### HIS MERITS.

When we speak of the merits of such an artist as Paul Potter, we feel indeed

"How poorly eloquence of words  
Translates the tenderness of hearts like his."

For it is, as a great critic has said, in the touching "tenderness" of Paul Potter's nature (as evidenced in his works), that he so far surpasses all who have toiled like him in the great fields of nature and art! L'Abbé de Lamennais says of him, that he endowed nature with a subtle eloquence, almost undefinable, and yet universally felt—a something which excites our emotions, touches our hearts, moves our very spirits, leads us to indulge in sweet fancies, and gently guides our thoughts to the contemplation of the infinite, the boundless, the eternal!

In what consists (he asks) this mysterious magic by which he holds us spell-bound for hours together, wrapt in dreamy contemplation, before nature in her simplest and most ordinary forms?

A meadow, with a clear brook, and a few old willows. A valley crossed by a torrent swollen by the storm, and of which the distant windings, bright and red in the setting sun, blend with the horizon, and are lost there. A poor cabin on a wild common, at the foot of a bare rock, and in the distance the sea—a stormy sea, and far, far off a solitary sail, bowed by the winds, and almost engulfed by the waves. Who does not behold in all this the artist's, the poet's mind—his inner self, which in a manner becomes part of your own, and governs you? Yes, it is the great genius of art, which bears you up on its strong and buoyant wings, to regions far above any that the mere senses can ever reach!

Do you not discern beneath the external forms of Paul Potter's animals an inner self, an individuality peculiar to each? Not merely the creature, but all that distinguishes its identity—expression, attitude, even the very glance of the eye—all, in Paul Potter's animals, seems eloquent with an eloquence stronger than that of language!

In such scenes of animal and rustic life as those which have immortalised the name of Paul Potter, the soul of the artist is as legible as in the greatest efforts of historical painters. His engravings in *aqua-fortis* are of the highest order of merit; and he worked so hard, with such passionate energy and unremitting zeal, both as a painter and an engraver, that his life, though a very short one for all other purposes, was—if we reckon it by the years entirely devoted to his art—not a short one for the painter. He seems to have given to his sublime calling all those hours too often lavished by genius on dissipation, folly, indolence, or vanity; and thus he died a Great Master at the early age of twenty-nine.

All that we know of Paul Potter's life inspires us with an affectionate respect for his memory. He was of that loving, confiding temper, so often united with the highest order of genius. Looking at the melancholy beauty of his noble countenance, and the slender proportions of his graceful form, and reading his pure and poetical mind, translated in his fascinating pictures, we cannot think without a pang of the agony he must have felt when betrayed by the woman he loved so devotedly; and the struggle that must have preceded his pardon of an offence which even merciful men have thought unpardonable. Always delicate, and subject to low fever and attacks of extreme languor and debility, there is no doubt that his untiring zeal and resolute mental industry (in spite of bodily weakness)

accelerated his death, which took place, in 1654, at Amsterdam, when he was only twenty-nine. He left behind him the Adrienne he had loved, "not wisely, but too well," and a little daughter, three years of age.

## ADRIAN BRAUWER.



RAUWER'S birth-place, like that of Homer, has been a subject of some controversy. The Flemings, eager to appropriate a painter whose fame sheds lustre on the nation to which he belongs, declare, on the testimony of Corneille de Bie, that he first drew breath at Oudenarde, while Houbraker, who is a more credible witness, states, on the authority of a letter from Nicholas Six, the Dutch burgomaster, that Brauwer was born at Harlem. But whatever may have been his birth-place, it is quite clear that he was of obscure origin, and that the poverty of his parents prevented their cultivating the genius of their son, which owed its development to accident.

His mother, who was mantua-maker and milliner to the peasant girls in the neighbourhood, was indebted to young Brauwer for the flower designs, birds, and little fancy-work patterns with which she adorned the caps and collars of her fair customers. One day, while the young artist was tracing the outline of these designs upon paper with a pen, Frank Hals, an artist of some note, happened to pass by, and, being struck with the precocious talent displayed by the young urchin's designs, asked him if he would like to become a painter. "Yes," said the boy, "if my mother has no objection." The mother, however, before she gave her consent to her son's becoming an apprentice of Frank Hals, exacted an undertaking that the painter would support him until he was in a condition to provide for himself; "for," said she, "while the grass grows the horse starves."

In the *atelier* of Frank Hals Adrian Brauwer made such rapid progress, that he would soon have relieved his master of the expense of maintaining him, if he had been permitted to work for himself. Frank Hals, however, perceiving in his pupil a boldness and originality of style which would eventually render his productions popular, determined, if possible, to monopolise the profits of them. He therefore separated the young Brauwer from the rest of his pupils, and sent him to paint by himself in a distant and solitary garret. There he kept him at work from morning till night, supplying him only with just food enough to keep body and soul together.

The curiosity of the other apprentices was aroused by the sudden disappearance of their fellow-student, and they accordingly watched the moment when their master was from home to search for the young prisoner. They each, in turn, visited the garret, and, through a chink in the wall, they saw Brauwer at work upon some very pretty designs. One of them asked him to paint "The Five Senses," at twopence a piece; and Brauwer treated this hackneyed subject with wonderful originality and simplicity. Another of the apprentices gave him an order for "The Twelve Months of the Year," at the same price of twopence a piece, but with a promise of higher remuneration, if, instead of a mere sketch of the subject, the painter would fill up with care his spirited outline.

The little sums which Brauwer was thus enabled to earn during the hours which, without being detected by his avaricious master, he could devote to his own business, rendered him partly independent of his tyrant. But Hals, and his wife, who was even more greedy of gain than her husband, soon perceived that there was a screw loose somewhere; and, to stimulate the languishing industry of their prisoner, diminished the daily supplies. This severity, however, had a very different effect upon Brauwer to what his cruel taskmasters had intended, and made him contrive the means of releasing himself from duress and destitution. "He managed," says his biographer Descamps, "to escape from the dwelling of Frank Hals, and traversed the whole town without the least idea where he was



ADRIAN BRAUWER. FROM A PAINTING BY VAN DYCK.



going, or what would become of him. He purchased of a baker a large piece of gingerbread, and, without any other food, passed the day under the shelter of the organ of the parish church. He was there recognised by a customer of his master's, who soon guessed, from his appearance and manner, what had befallen him. He inquired of Brauwer why he had left Frank Hals' atelier, and the young artist gave him the reason and the particulars of his escape. He brought forward innumerable proofs of the gripping avarice and detestable tyranny of Frank Hals and his wife, who, not satisfied with the very large profits they derived from his professional exertions, left him to die of cold and starvation. Brauwer's pale face and ragged raiment confirmed the truth of his story; and so interested was his hearer in his fate, that he exacted from Hals, to whose custody he restored the runaway apprentice, a promise of better treatment for the future.

Through the good offices of this chance friend Brauwer succeeded in obtaining more indulgence from his odious master. He was allowed enough to eat, and was rigged out in some second-hand finery purchased



THE FIDDLER. FROM A PAINTING BY ADRIAN BRAUWER.

from an old clothes man. Delighted with the turn his affairs had taken, the young artist set to work with renewed vigour, and produced several original pictures, which Hals disposed of for large sums, stating that they were the work of a great foreign master. Their real merit was enhanced in the eyes of the public by the mystery in which their pedigree was involved, and their value in the market rose accordingly. In the meantime Brauer, proud of his finery, and more vigorous in mind and body

through the improvement in his diet, gave full scope to a genius which was beginning to make a noise in the world, and of the existence of which he was the only one in the house who was ignorant. Among his fellow students was one Adrian Van Ostade, who was already paving his way to immortality, and whose kindred genius early appreciated in the productions of Adrian Brauwer originality of conception, fineness of touch, and harmony of the different parts. Disgusted with the manner in which Hals treated his pupil, Van Ostade, after upbraiding Brauwer with his folly in not enfranchising himself from such bondage, and in not turning to his own advantage talents that would secure not competence alone, but even fame, advised him to escape from Harlem, and set up at Amsterdam, where, as Van Ostade knew, upon good authority, his pictures were already selling at high prices.

Like all who have no decided character of their own, Brauwer was easily persuaded by those who had. He, therefore, followed Van Ostade's advice, again escaped from the durance of Frank Hals's establishment, and set out for Amsterdam, where he had neither relations, friends, introductions, nor recommendations. At Amsterdam he put up at the sign of *L'Ecu de France*, kept by Van Sommeren, who had himself in his youth followed the profession of an artist, and whose son, Henry Van Sommeren, was a painter of landscapes and flowers of considerable repute. The friendless wanderer was welcomed by the Van Sommerens, father and son. Finding in their wayfaring house a better supplied larder than he had seen in his master's establishment, he took heart, and, obeying the inspiration of the moment, improvised on canvas some little conversational pieces, which astonished his hosts, who, in token of their approbation, presented him with a fine sheet of copper, on which he might display all the resources of his genius. Upon this sheet Brauwer described at once a drunken brawl in a tavern between soldiers and peasants. The scene was painted to the life. Tables overturned; cards scattered around; gamblers hurling pewter pots at each others' heads, amongst whom one, severely wounded and furious with rage on the floor, is represented as half drunk and half dead. This piece was full of spirit, vigour, and tone, and from its peculiar style was soon recognised as the work of that fictitious foreigner whose productions Frank Hals had sold so dear. M. Du Vermandois, a celebrated connoisseur, saw the piece, and was most curious to know the author. So curious, indeed, that for this purpose, without attempting to cheapen it, he gave at once two hundred ducats for the painting. Brauwer, when he saw the money, could scarcely believe his eyes. He who had begun with paintings at twopence a-piece, was literally bewildered when he beheld two hundred ducats, all his own, and (what was a still more intoxicating reflection) the first produce of a mine which, as it existed in himself, he could work to any extent he pleased without having to account to any one. We are informed that in his ecstasy he spread the money on his bed, and literally rolled himself in his riches. We see, however, in his case a sad corroboration of the wisdom of the old saying, "Light come, light go." Without any knowledge of the value of money, without guidance, and without experience, with a notion that gold was only of use as a means of enjoyment, Brauwer gave himself up to the impulses of his pleasure-loving disposition; and when, after an absence of nine days from Van Sommeren's tavern, he was asked on his return what had become of his money, "Heaven be praised," said he, "I have got rid of it."

Drunkenness and debauchery were, in Brauwer's opinion, the height of enjoyment. The privations he had endured in Frank Hals's establishment, combined with the impulses of a naturally jovial disposition, made his present liberty and comparative wealth doubly dangerous to him. So sudden a change overpowered his weak mind. The debasing pursuit of sensual gratification, and not the ennobling triumphs of art, occupied his thoughts, and he therefore looked upon painting not as an end but as a means. Often was he compelled, when pressed by a landlady who refused to wait for her money, to pledge his most valuable productions for what he could get at the moment. But so impatient of contradiction was he, and so self-willed, that when picture fanciers declined to purchase at the price he demanded, he would often throw the result of a week's labour into the fire, and paint with more care a piece that should produce the sum he exacted.

There is no species of practical joke, the perpetration of which has not been attributed to Adrian Brauwer by his Dutch and Flemish biographers. Even the childish prank of passing his head through windows supplied with oiled paper instead of glass (such as were then in use among the poorest weavers), and asking "What's the time of day?" (of course, without waiting for a reply from the wondering inmates), is laid to Brauwer's charge.

Corneille de Bie tells us that on one occasion, Adrian Brauwer, having been robbed of his clothes by some pirates on the Dutch coast, contrived to make himself, then and there, a suit of sail-cloth, and painted thereon flowers and foliage admirably, and closely imitative of those in some Indian manufactures. Having given great brilliancy to this contrivance, by the aid of varnish or gum, he strutted about the town, and attracted the attention of many ladies who, of course, eagerly inquired or what stuff his dress was made, and where the material was to be purchased.

Brauwer, after mystifying all the people he met about this new, singular, and brilliant fabric, repaired at night to the theatre, and contrived, after the performance, to slip on the stage. Then, holding a wet sponge in his hand, he turned himself round and round several times—strutted up and down—entreated the ladies to examine this material, of which he was the sole manufacturer, and of which the only specimen was on his back. Then, to the great amazement of the pit, he, with the wet sponge, wiped off all the exquisite painting and patterns, leaving the sail-cloth beneath as emblematic of human life, which was, he told them, as worthless as the wretched coat which had appeared to them at first so beautiful and so costly.

Another philosophical joke (similar in sentiment, and stupid enough in itself) he produced on another occasion. Argenville tells us that some of his relations invited him to a wedding *because he had a new velvet coat*. Brauwer, selecting among the dishes those with the richest gravy, smeared his coat all over with the fat, remarking that "the velvet ought to share in the feast, *since it was the velvet that had been invited*." He then threw his coat into the fire, and hastened back to the alehouse and to his old rags.

James Houbraken, who engraved in such admirable style the portraits which illustrate his father's "Lives of the Painters," placed a monkey by the side of Brauwer's likeness. He meant this device as an emblem of that buffoonery which, so far from wearing off as Brauwer advanced in years, only grew daily more gross and unseemly. And, indeed, what in the child were called playful pranks, were in the man gross practical jokes which smelt of the low haunts of the buffoon that indulged in them.

Happily for Brauwer it is not by buffoonery alone he is known to posterity. No! he has immortalised his name by masterpieces of expression, of colouring, and of handling; and by the *chef-d'œuvre* the graver of "Visscher" has multiplied. The rarity of the originals adds to their value in the eyes of connoisseurs; and thus the very indolence of this toper, in a manner, enhances his value and his fame.

But, in justice to this singular being, we must say that in his peculiar style he is unapproached and unapproachable. What fire—what action—what quickness of perception—what powers of observation! Where shall we find such broad grins and such jolly red noses, such roystering ragged black-guards, and such characteristic attitudes of drunkenness in all its stages, except where a genius like Brauwer's delighted to copy such scenes from life, and was intimate with his models, because he was not there as a fine gentleman painter, before whom they would naturally restrain themselves, but as a boon companion, who saw them as they were?

#### "THE FIDDLER"

Is a picture far more pleasant to dwell upon than the "Tavern Brawl;" for though music is the least intellectual of the arts, and musicians are too often zealous worshippers of Bacchus, still

"Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast;"

and an orgie loses something of its swinish sensuality, when music silences the oath, the curse, or the obscene jest.

"The fiddler" in this picture is in an ecstasy of self-created enjoyment, a perfect paroxysm of conceited self-enchantment; the half-shut eyes, the mouth wide open, the fingers, the feet, all are in harmony; and had Brauwer never painted anything but this "Fiddler," it would have made a name. The boer who stands up behind him, enjoying at once the music and his glass, is humorous and characteristic. The other figures are somewhat caricatured; of course, they were all meant to be singing in chorus; but the old woman, with her head thrown back, and her mouth wide open, looks as if she were having a tooth extracted, and were uttering a howl of anguish instead of some sweet sound, while another of the singers, bending over her with something in his hand that may be MS. music, but looks

very like the napkin dentists bind round the key-instrument used for extracting grinders, completes this view of the subject. But for this slight obscurity and *équivoque* (caused by exaggeration), the picture of "The Fiddler" may be pronounced one of Adrian Brauer's best, and a good average specimen of his masterly and humorous powers.



THE TIPPLERS. FROM A PAINTING BY ADRIAN BRAUER.

"THE TIPPLERS."

Brauer, in his picture of "The Tipplers," excites various feelings, but admiration of the truthfulness of the artist preponderates. This sketch is a bit of reality transferred to canvas. In the enjoyment of the full tankard all the muscles of the guests are relaxed, every care forgotten; but in



their brutal, sottish expressions we see the degrading influence of excess. To give due honour to age, we begin with the figure to the left. How grim is the profile, how weak and prosy the speech in which he is evidently discussing the merits of the liquor. Of the middle figure, the whole expression is admirable. The features convey the idea of vacant wonder, and the eyes fixed on the old toper seem to be calculating how long he will remain above ground to prate about nothing. The masterpiece is the front figure. Here awkwardness itself is made easy, and coarseness artistic. The face, under

THE TAVERN DRAVL. FROM A PAINTING BY ADRIAN BRAUWER.



civilising influences, would have been handsome, and the masses of black hair show that the harsh lines in the countenance are the result of hard work and hard drinking, rather than of age.

When, after contemplating this picture of the genuine Dutch School, we have done justice to its merits, we regret that so much talent should have been devoted to such a subject. Nevertheless, a good moral lesson may be drawn from Brauwer's picture of "The Tipplers." It is thus that intem-

perance, like all vice, changes into ugliness the original beauty of the "human face divine." Of this piece all the accessories are well conceived and effective in their execution. Harsh as are the component parts, consistency has been so well preserved that the *tout ensemble* is perfectly harmonious.

In discussing Brauwer's peculiarities as a painter, we must observe he did not produce his effects by repeated touches or laborious working up. He drew his objects boldly, and seemed to disdain the cold results of detail.

Sometimes Brauwer's pieces are mere effective sketches, left so entirely "playful" that the very texture of the canvas is discernible. But this was not always Brauwer's style. He could produce highly-finished pictures in which delicacy, breadth, and firmness contended for the mastery. In these he could evince a humour equal to that of Teniers, and a warmth of touch that enabled him to rival Van Ostade and Rembrandt. In a word, Brauwer may be held up as a model in the execution of a painting, but as a warning in the choice of subjects.

Ostade and Rembrandt could not have chosen coarse and depraved models, because they would have been at variance with all their sympathies. The contrary of this is applicable to the highly-gifted, but misguided Brauwer. There are men who have no greater enemies than themselves. Brauwer was one of these. So deep-seated was his love of a licentious, self-indulgent life, that when Rubens rescued him from prison and from famine, and welcomed him under his own roof, he found the regulations of a well-ordered house so irksome, that he took his departure and resumed his former habits of life. Urged, probably, by fear of the police, he afterwards fled from his native country, and took refuge in Paris.

We have few records of the life he led in this gay capital, but it seems he worked but little; and when at length he turned his steps homewards, it was to enter the Antwerp Hospital with a broken constitution and a heart wrung with remorse. In this asylum he died, in the prime of life; a striking instance of the inefficacy of the most brilliant talents unaccompanied by strict principle and moral rectitude.

#### "THE TAVERN BRAWL."

How admirably the anger of the aggressive party is contrasted with the stupid, loutish expression of mere bodily pain and half-drunken terror in the open-mouthed sot who has, we can well believe, by some coarse jest or brutish boast, roused to livid rage the more intellectual and civilised of the toppers.

The stupid wonder of the two spectators, who seem fully impressed with the wisdom of the old distich—

"Those who in quarrels interpose  
Will sometimes get a bloody nose"—

and do not attempt to separate the combatants, is full of quiet humour, true to nature—the gross, selfish, sensual nature of low life in the Low Countries. The attitudes of all are perfect, faultless, save in the hand of the brutish boer who is endeavouring to avert the chastisement he has provoked.

The perspective of the alehouse room is very good; it does not, like most interiors, convey an idea of great space; and the inspiration of the scene may be traced to the beer-barrel which, with a few Dutch-built chairs, completes this picture. It is a faithful copy of life, but life in one of its lowest and most revolting phases.

It would have been well for Adrian Brauwer if the details of his life had not been so greedily fastened upon by those who are too fond of dwelling on the infirmities of genius, particularly when they are of a kind to provoke a smile or raise a laugh. How little, on the other hand, do we know of the private life of many exquisite painters, who, not being ludicrous through their follies, or melodramatic through their vices, are scarcely considered worthy of the biographer's notice or the attention of posterity. It is a pity that we know anything of Adrian Brauwer, except as the painter of those admirable masterpieces in which his devotion to the jolly god is only implied, not paraded.

## ALBERT CUYP.



NE thousand six hundred and six will be ever famous in the annals of art. Rembrandt and Cuyp, each in his own style without a rival in any age or any country, were born in that memorable year; the one at Leyden, and the other at Dordrecht.

The lives of these two great masters, who shed so great a halo round the nation to which they belonged, were passed amid wars and rumours of wars, religious persecutions, and civil commotions. And yet, in their immortal productions, which are the trophies of the arts of peace, we discover no traces of the kindred blood that was being shed like water on every side. The one throws the magic light of his genius over all the scenes of social life, without particularising those which the history of his own country would have supplied. The other, wrapt in the contemplation of nature and the pursuit of art, neither saw nor heard of any of the acts of that protracted tragedy of which Holland was the scene, and religion the subject-matter—nor of the alarms of the thirty years' war—nor of the religious persecution which disgraced the epoch. The ruminating ox and the dun milch cow—the quiet home scenery of the arable and the pasture farm—the tremulous sea, dotted here and there with snowy sails;—these were the objects which engrossed his exclusive attention; and through their reproduction on canvas, he has earned for himself an earthly immortality. He delighted in illumining the misty meadows of his moist and murky country with the beams of a golden sun, and in peopling his landscapes with shepherds tending their flocks, sportsmen in pursuit of their game, mariners sailing up the Meuse, or fishermen landing with difficulty their heavily-laden nets. Envyable, indeed, is that power of concentrating the mind upon the peaceable pursuit of art amid the din and crash of all the elements of civil war! Who has not heard of those religious dissensions of the Calvinists and the Arminians, by which Holland was convulsed during the course of the seventeenth century? Squabbles about straws, on questions frivolous and obscure, the meaning of which the disputants themselves would have been at a loss to define. Unable to convince each other by argument, the disputants had recourse to arms, and endeavoured to force down each others' throats, at the point of the sword, the tenets for their adherence to which neither party could give a reason. Forgetting, in their Christian zeal, all Christian forbearance, they butchered each other in their frenzied fanaticism. Citizens of the same town—even members of the same household—were arrayed against each other, in this polemical warfare, and blood flowed on all sides.

The Calvinistic Synod of Dordrecht (the birth-place of Albert Cuyp), assuming the powers and privileges of a supreme court of justice, having found Barnevelt guilty of conspiracy, condemned him to death, and included his young brother in his sentence, as an accomplice before the fact, for not having revealed the plot. The early life of Albert Cuyp was passed amid these revolting schisms; and he was an impassive witness of the invasion of Holland by Louis XIV., and of the melancholy fate of John and Corneille de Witt, natives of Dordrecht, and victims of the misdirected zeal of the citizens of La Haye. A spectator, but not a promoter, of these scenes of bigoted persecution and bloodshed—disgraceful alike to Holland and human nature—Albert Cuyp endeavoured to forget, in the glorious triumphs of art, the degrading excesses of his countrymen; and, while a religious frenzy was decimating their ranks, he was quietly watching the wheel of the water-mill, spreading his net for the salmon-trout, or studying the effect of an afternoon sun on the soft and shadowy landscape.

If he really possessed the power of withdrawing his mind from the contemplation of the horrors around him, and of concentrating all his thoughts on his canvas, he must have been either more or less than human. But, whether real or apparent only, this insensibility enabled him to bequeath to posterity paintings of inestimable value—glorious *chef-d'œuvre*, from which we learn to appreciate all that is lovely in life. Had he been more impressionable, and sympathised, like Ruysdael or Rem-

brandt, with the tragical events of the war, he might perhaps have presented us with terrible or touching mementos of the time, but he would never have fascinated the eye, or have soothed the troubled spirit, by the calm and quiet beauty of his landscapes.

Albert Cuyp was a pupil of his father, Jacob Gerritsoon Cuyp, a painter of great merit, and the



CATTLE WATERING FROM A PAINTING BY ALBERT CUYP

originator of the style in which the son was destined to achieve so great a name. But Jacob Gerritsoon Cuyp, like many other masters of the sixteenth century, only paved the way for the triumphal progress of his successors and imitators. In this respect his fate was similar to that of David Teniers senior, whose fame was so entirely lost in that of his son, who imitated him, that posterity has con-

founded Jacob with David, and recognised but one great painter under the name of Teniers. In the same way the merits of Simon de Vlieger were forgotten in the renown of his pupil, William Van der Velde; and Berghem has completely eclipsed the memory of his master Nicholas Moyaert. Wynants is perhaps the only painter of the time who preserved his ascendancy in the style he had created; and all the other painters who have themselves originated a school are lost to fame, because history, however impartial in all other respects, credits artists not with their promises but with their performances. With respect to Cuyp, he has earned for himself an immortality by those peculiar compositions which, although similar in subject, are entirely different in style from the masterpieces of Van der Velde, Berghem, Paul Potter, Wouvermans, Karel Dujardin, Ruysdael, Peter de Hooghe, &c. &c. The subjects which Albert Cuyp chose for his models were as inexhaustible as his powers of representing them. The human form divine, animals, still life, landscapes, sea-pieces, interiors of



THE ENCAMPMENT. FROM A PAINTING BY ALBERT CUIP.

churches, winter scenes, moonlight views,—all these Albert Cuyp has described with a masterly touch and a power of imagination which prove that he was equally great in every style. He had that wonderful fertility of invention which enabled him to vary in a hundred different ways the same subject. He never had recourse to any of the stereotyped devices of the painters of his day, who depended for the effect they wished to produce on the introduction of striking contrasts, or on the homeliness or hideousness of their subjects. The ragged and weatherbeaten vagrant, the lean and lanky cattle, whose emaciated forms, when stretched on the meadow, seem but a framework of bone,—such are the objects which most of the painters of the Dutch school have chosen for picturesque effect. They delighted in imparting a certain fascination to things which are in themselves revolting, and in grouping together in their masterpieces with a skill and grace which have secured the admiration of

posterity, sickness, sorrow, and decrepitude. Through the talisman of genius, they have, indeed, managed to convert rags into riches. Albert Cuyp, however, drawing his inspirations from a truer source, contrives to make objects opposite in kind conducive to "the picturesque." Despising the shallow artifice of those who had sacrificed truth to effect, he introduces only the objects which are in themselves attractive, such as hale and handsome men, who appear well-clad and well-conditioned; cattle that are sleek and sound; and instead of misty skies, rugged rocks, or melancholy moors, a laughing landscape, lighted by a golden sun.

A celebrated critic, in a treatise on "the picturesque," remarks, that "we admire in a horse, when taken as the representative type of that noble and graceful quadruped, symmetry of form, powerful action, a proud and fiery spirit, and a sleek and shining coat. In his painted likeness, we also look for these characteristics of his race; but as a picturesque object, we should prefer a broken-down hack—a goat, a cow, or an ass. Their rude outlines and the roughness of their coats give the painter greater opportunities for the display of his artistic skill. The richness of the tint depends on the inequalities of the surface, which being lighted at different angles, leaves the painter at liberty to increase or diminish at will his lights and shades." Such an idea of "the picturesque" could never have been derived from the study of the masterpieces of Albert Cuyp, who, to arrest our attention, paints only cattle in good case, horses well caparisoned, and a landscape illumined by a bright meridian sun.

This theory of the picturesque was peculiar to Cuyp at the time, and is the characteristic which distinguishes him from all his rivals, and, indeed, from all the other painters of the Dutch school. Unconsciously to himself, he enunciated in his practice those theories upon the subject of landscape, which Lairesse, the French artist, professed a century later,—theories quite at variance with the creed of our critic. In rural subjects, Albert Cuyp discovered an innate grace, which he transferred to his canvas, just as Claude Lorraine invested with the poetry and sublimity of his own inspired fancy the Campagna of Rome, the Cascades of Tivoli, and the Gulf of Naples.

#### "CATTLE WATERING."

The painting from which this engraving is copied, verifies the truth of the observations we have made on the subject of "the picturesque." The handling of the subject is perfect. The milch cows are well-conditioned and valuable cattle, who have evidently been fed on the rich and succulent pastures of the well-watered, alluvial soil of Holland. The demi-tints of the foreground reveal nothing but what is in itself pleasing and attractive, and the warm and cherishing light of the horizon, is artistically contrasted with the deep shade of the banks of the river. The whole scene is suggestive of peace, plenty, and prosperity, from the church in the middle distance, with its tiny, characteristic rustic steeple, to the *schloss* or *château* of the magnate of the district, pleasantly situate at the foot of the hills, which shelter it from the winds. The quiet sail, with scarce a breath to swell the flapping canvas, glides slowly over the smooth surface of the river, and the fleecy clouds, fringed with the light of the western sun, give a gay and enlivening character to the whole smiling landscape.

Lebrun tells us that our own countrymen were the first who learned to appreciate, at their just value, the masterpieces of Cuyp. "The French," he says, "were a long time discovering their merits, although they well knew that in England the *chefs-d'œuvre* of this celebrated landscape painter were fetching between three and four hundred pounds a-piece." "Cuyp," says this same authority, "has been equally successful in every style, and in each and all he has shown himself so perfect, that it is difficult to say in which he has succeeded the best." Portraits, landscapes, animals, fruits,—all were equally familiar to him; and although it is as a landscape and animal painter that he has achieved the greatest fame, we believe that if he had devoted the same amount of time and attention to any other style he would have been quite as successful in it. "The sun," says Lebrun, "seems to give light to the creations of his pencil." Our neighbours on the other side of the Channel attribute our enthusiastic admiration of Cuyp to this very circumstance. They say that it is because Cuyp passed so much of his time in the contemplation of the sun, and devoted all the resources of his genius to the representation of the god of day, under his most glorious aspects, the English prefer him to almost any other foreign artist. They malign our country and our climate, in declaring that Cuyp is indebted to the fact of our seeing so little of the

sun in our own foggy England, for our great admiration of his masterpieces, in which a horizon radiant with light is the greatest attraction. Our neighbours refer our warm admiration of their Claude to the same cause; and as a proof of this, say that whenever we wish to praise Cuyp very highly, we dignify him with the title of "The Dutch Claude." However this may be, it is quite clear that the warmth and brilliancy of Cuyp's colouring were not owing to the recollections of the sunshine of a brighter climate, for he had never, like Claude, studied in Italy, or drawn his inspirations from those lovely landscapes, so classically beautiful, which are the glory of Southern Europe.

#### "THE ENCAMPMENT"

Is a picture which, in spite of its rare merits, is by no means characteristic of the style or genius of Cuyp. There is a transparent depth in the sky, and a fleecy lightness in the sailing clouds, a boldness about the rocks, and a vivid earthiness about the foreground, which betray the great master; but the horse is not the war-horse nor the man the warrior. The former is more like a good citizen's well-fed, ambling hack, and the Dutch-built impassive squire has more of the burgess than of the soldier in his face, form, and attitude.

But if the conception of this picture has nothing grand or masterly, the handling, the touch, the finish, the distribution of light and shade, and the delicate yet brilliant distinctness of detail, entitle it to a place among the *chefs-d'œuvre* of Cuyp's earlier manner.

If the works of Albert Cuyp could yet be classed according to their dates (a thing we fear perfectly impossible now), we should probably be confirmed in our opinion that his large and exquisite landscapes, in which animal life is only an accessory of the composition, belong to that epoch of his life when his genius, strong in the sense of its mighty power, had reached its culminating point, and had little more to learn from its own experience or from that of others.

In those pictures of Cuyp's in which one does not feel that the goal is won, and that art and nature "can no farther go," animals form the principal objects, and the landscape is accessory,—even the human figure is of secondary importance. This is the case in that singular composition which bears some resemblance to the "Paradise" of John Breughel, and in which Orpheus, seated under a tree, may be seen taming the wildest animals by the harmonious sounds of his violin, tuning their fierce howls to his dulcet notes, and taming down their discord to his harmony. Now, as he (Cuyp) had to depict tigers, elephants, leopards, and other beasts, with whose anatomy and habits he was of course much less intimately acquainted than with those of the domestic and farm-yard animals he had so closely studied, our worthy Dutchman had recourse, like Cardinal Richelieu, to cunning when strength failed, and—

"The lion's skin proving too short,  
He eked it out with the fox's."

In other words, he adroitly placed in the foreground, close to Orpheus, a cow, a horse, a dog, a cat, hares, &c., and consigned to the indistinctness of distance those wild sons of the jungle and the desert, with whom he was of course less familiar; and whose structure and expression he had not made the study of his life.

It does not seem to have struck Albert Cuyp, as it does those who criticise this picture, that the effect of the magical power of Orpheus loses immensely by this arrangement; for it requires no great inspiration to tame and subdue the quiet tenants of our stables and farm-yards.

But the greatest genius cannot bear everything in mind. Sir Thomas Lawrence—modern king of portrait-painters—once painted a bishop with a thumb and five fingers; the fifth finger existing only in the painter's sight, or oversight.

When Albert Cuyp died (the exact date of his death has not been ascertained), he left behind him (says Houbraken) no model, no *chef-d'œuvre* of another's, no drawing by any master. This clearly proves that he studied nature alone. Some have attributed to avarice that independence of all pictures but those painted by nature's cunning hand which prevented his ever purchasing the smallest subject; but the fact is simply, that Albert Cuyp did not study the works of his predecessors or contemporaries, because nature was the source of his inspiration; she was his mistress; in her school alone he studied.

and as he was a favourite pupil of the one great head of all schools of art, why should he have condescended to learn of her disciples?

To him (poor pupil that he was of Dame Nature!) she spoke in accents so clear and convincing, that



STARTING FOR A RIDE. FROM A PAINTING BY ALBERT OUTST.

no interpreters were requisite. In a man of great and true genius, all his faculties, talents, and powers tend to one object. His work is his life; and everything opposed to the accomplishment of this work must yield and perish. The very passions, which seem so fatal to the greatness and dignity of the



artist, are often only the means used by Destiny to lead him in the way in which she is resolved he shall go.

If parsimony had, indeed, anything to do with Cuyp's indifference to the possession of his great

MEADOWS ON THE BANKS OF THE NEUSE. FROM A PAINTING BY ALBERT CUYP.



rivals' works, and if he steered clear of the mania (so ruinous and so general at that time) for the possession of the engravings of the old masters, is it not clear that this dislike to spend was the safeguard of his originality? His economy (we will not call it avarice) was blessed in its results, for it

saved him from plagiarism and imitation, and secured to him that peculiar style, the noble simplicity and breadth of which distinguish him from all other Dutch painters, and that manner and touch, at once firm and free, which so completely defies imitation—"an unstudied originality." Such is the definition of the style of the great master who so charms and arrests us.

If those pictures in which he has so vividly portrayed rich **burgesses, country seats, equestrian parties, &c. &c.**, convey to us some idea of the society he moved in and must have adorned, it is in gazing on his wide fields, in which the long grass reaches the knees of the well-fed heifers—on his meres, whose ripples reflect the golden rays of the sun—on his distant horizons, faint as a dream, light as a vapour—on his huge animals, and on his fine old trees, that we recognise in Cuyp that deep love of nature, and that ardent, intense study of her charms, which seem an innate attribute of all great landscape painters, and are, as it were, a sixth sense, by the aid of which they are enabled thoroughly to appreciate and exquisitely to reproduce the beauties of the country.

The genius of Cuyp, prolific and versatile as it is, challenges comparison with the various masters in whose style he has painted. His hunting-pieces breathe a different spirit to those of Philip Wouvermans. The horses he has represented are of a distinct race, and the cavaliers of a different mould from those of his contemporary. Who has ever passed an hour among the art treasures of the Louvre without stopping to admire the beauties of that remarkable picture of Cuyp's, entitled—

#### "STARTING FOR A RIDE"?

A handsome cavalier, clad in scarlet and gold, has just mounted a splendid iron-gray charger, while his groom, whose back we see, dressed in a green velvet shooting-coat, is stooping to hold his stirrup. A strong light shed around the principal figures of the piece, reveals the master and his guest issuing from the gateway of an edifice of considerable size. The shadow of the building which spreads along the foreground, is in strong contrast with the brilliant halo which lights the background of the piece. Two shepherds tending a flock upon a hill, illumined by the meridian rays of the sun, produce a demitint artistically managed, which forms the connecting link between the shadow of the foreground and the bright tone of the distance. Nowhere have we seen a more striking or attractive illustration of country life among the wealthy and the highborn, who, abundantly supplied with the gifts of fortune, can enjoy at their ease the sunshine and smiles of the summer season.

The "Starting for a Ride" was accompanied by a corresponding piece, entitled "The Return from the Ride." This picture represented three horsemen issuing from the deep shade of a forest. The lord of the manor is distinguished from his two guests by the splendour of his dress, the beauty of his horse, and his noble mien. The gamekeeper, in the livery of his calling, is holding two dogs in a leash, and at the same time offering a partridge to one of the grooms. This incident seems to arrest the attention of the three horsemen. On one side, the trees and the underwood bring out the principal figures in the foreground, while on the other a smiling landscape, bathed in a soft light, spreads far into the distance. Cattle are seen at intervals; and further on, at the foot of the hill, a range of buildings, and some time-worn towers, which form, no doubt, a part of the manor-house towards which the hunting-party are now wending their way. The transition from the brilliant landscape in the distance to the figure of the noble cavalier in the foreground, with his blue velvet *surtout*, embroidered vest, long waving hair, and a kind of turban which he wears in lieu of a hat, creates a pleasant variety. The whole play of the *chiaro-oscuro* in this piece depends upon the contrast of the local tints. The rich coats of the bay and black horses are finely contrasted with that of the nobleman's steed, whose bright chestnut tint produces a pleasing variety. The dresses of the riders are as happily contrasted as the colours of their horses.

Cuyp, however, had his faults. Even in his finest conceptions there are occasional traces of carelessness and haste. In the "Starting for a Ride," for instance, the two dogs in the foreground are not at all in keeping with the rest of the picture. But so rare and accidental are shortcomings of this kind in the masterpieces of Cuyp, that many connoisseurs have been inclined to attribute this piece of the "Starting for a Ride" to the elder Cuyp, father of the celebrated artist, merely on account of the unartistic way in which these two dogs are handled,—so unwilling have his admirers been to convict a painter of Albert Cuyp's genius of an error of such magnitude.

In the conception of his subject, in the originality of his touch, and in the beauty of his colouring, no painter has, perhaps, ever surpassed Albert Cuyp. But admirable as he undoubtedly was in all these respects, he was still more remarkable for finish and execution. In illustrating the manners of his countrymen, he invests his picture with a kind of individuality, and without sacrificing historical truth he made his pieces bear the stamp of his own peculiar disposition. The same proud cavaliers to whom Wouvermans introduces us in his hunting scenes, figure in the pieces of Cuyp, but both they and their prancing steeds are seen through a different medium.

All true artists possess in themselves the spirit of the picturesque, and as "the loved are lovely," and the objects of our affection seem ever charming in our eyes, so Nature to her true lover always appears beautiful.

Albert Cuyp, who loved to wander by his favourite Meuse, often lighted upon exquisite subjects in his rambles. Among others,

#### "MEADOWS ON THE BANKS OF THE MEUSE"

is fine in varied beauty. We have a foreground of singular richness and fertility, a middle distance animated and effective, and a distance the Dutch flatness and monotony of which is relieved by a tower which boldly rises backed by a clear sky, and two windmills exactly alike, like "the Cheeryble brothers," and apparently like them hard at work doing all the good in their power. The sky in this masterpiece is singularly bold and fine; the trees are graceful, the foliage touched with a practised hand, guided by an eye well skilled in the inward anatomy and outward clothing of all the trees and shrubs of the woods and forests, the fields and plains. The cattle are the very *beau-ideal* of sleek, happy, well-fed, well-bred kine.

Cuyp likes to make his animals seem to enjoy their short existence amid those fertile scenes—

"Where pensive cattle stray,

Where life's a brief but happy holiday."

A cowherd playing on a pipe, as free from care as the cows he is presumed to tend, and two children listening to his strains, complete this *chef-d'œuvre*, which, though the Meuse is supposed to be the chief object of interest, and gives its name to the piece, might well dispense with the little glimpse of that fair stream, so full is it of other objects of beauty and interest.

Still water, which gives a charm to any scene, lends an additional grace to this. It reflects the calm sky, the quiet distance, and conveys pleasant thoughts of a clear stream wherein the cattle can slake their thirst, and cool their dusty hoofs.

#### "VIEW OF DORDRECHT."

In his excursions along the river, Albert Cuyp, as we stated, selected many favourite scenes for his canvas, scenes which a thousand of uninspired spectators would have passed without discovering in them anything worthy of remark. But he, with the true instinct of genius, recognised at once the beauties of the landscape, and transferred his impressions to paper as quickly as he had received them. Here we have fishing-boats, vessels of different tonnage, some at anchor, and some under weigh. A ray of sunshine lights up the cordage and the masts, gleams on the rowing boat as it makes for the bank, and flashes from the feathered oar, as the rapidly succeeding strokes impel it onward. On the banks of the river rises the church-steeple of Dordrecht, surrounded by the buildings of his native town, so dear to the eyes and the heart of the artist. This sharp and needle-like steeple figures in many of Cuyp's landscapes—landscapes in which he so often introduces his favourite Meuse, that amateurs have called them his "water-pieces." In the style of the painting from which our engraving is copied, Albert Cuyp is almost without a rival. The faithful accuracy with which he has described all the minutiae of the rigging, shows how well he was acquainted with practical seamanship.

In Van Goyen, who was more superficial, there was far less variety. And, indeed, to excel in this style, a universality of talent is required almost unattainable by man. He introduced into these "water-pieces" almost everything he could paint—horses passing the river on a raft, rustic cottages

embedded in foliage, situated on the banks of a canal, and inhabited by Dutchwomen, who wear caps of various colours; sailors of the true Dutch build, sailing down the Meuse, or navigating the Scheldt; boats laden with wood for Flushing, or barges towed along by a draught horse, and freighted with travellers. These barges, which, on account of the numerous canals which intersect the country, were once very common in Holland, are called *Trechtschuyt*, and are for the most part of light build, with only one mast. The passage fares are at the rate of a halfpenny a mile. In these boats there are private cabins which can be hired at a small increase of fare. The private cabins are in the stern of the barge, and are lighted on either side by two windows. The hiring of the private cabin is in Holland a matter of considerable importance, and we may judge of the character of the people from the attention they pay to such trivial matters. Although the fare is only a few halfpence, a printed receipt for the money is given by an officer stationed at the gate of the town, whose only employment is to regulate



VIEW OF DORDRECHT. FROM A PAINTING BY ALBERT CUIP.

the fares of the *Trechtschuyt*. This silent and characteristic mode of travelling was a subject which interested the Dutch painter, who loved everything which was peculiar to his own country. It is really wonderful that the man who could shed so beautiful a light on his horizons, and make his landscapes so smiling with external objects, should have had a talent for representing with so much architectural accuracy the interiors of churches and public buildings.

#### "VIEW OF THE MEUSE, NEAR MAASTRICHT."

In this view, rife with a variety of excellence, the transparency of the river first attracts our attention, while the shadows thrown by the distant town of Maastricht bring out in strong relief the gracefulness of the pile of buildings.

The picturesque distance, hemmed in by mountains, reminds us of Rhine scenery; but the foreground offers richer matter for the artist's brush than the stiff regularity of German vineyards.

This view so abounds in animal life, that Cuyp seems to have been too lavish of it, so graceful is

the distance, and so characteristic the trees. A group of three animals would have sufficed to form a fine picture, supposing these animals had been transferred to the canvas by the magic touch of Cuyp's master hand. The sturdy resolution of the black bull, the calm self-complacency of the fat, handsome

VIEW OF THE MEUSE, NEAR MAFTRICHT. FROM A PAINTING BY ALBERT CUIP.



cows, contrasting so forcibly with the haggard proportions of the white horse (the son of perpetual toil) give a reality to the principal group and bespeak the strength of nature, and of nature only.

We own we are tempted to envy the possessor of this glowing *chef-d'œuvre*. Who can wonder that at the Louvre the results of Cuyp's labours are surrounded by admirers?

It was nature in smiles that possessed the greatest attractions for Cuyp. Strong shadows and

cloudy skies were his aversion. When he chooses winter-scenes, he lights them up with a January sun.

One of our artist's most beautiful compositions, entitled "Fishing under the Tree" (now in the possession of the Duke of Bedford), is an instance of Cuyp's power of rendering December cheerful and even smiling. In fact, Cuyp achieved the rare triumph of painting winter without dreariness, and moon-light without melancholy.

### HIS MERITS.

No Dutch painter of landscapes, although Holland has produced a host of artists in this style, has ever surpassed, or, perhaps, even equalled Cuyp in his knowledge of aerial perspective. None have diffused over their pictures so bright and transparent an atmosphere, or a light so pure and enlivening. Inhaling with his first breath the fogs of a country which he never quitted during the whole of his life, he must have possessed in his own peaceful mind an inexhaustible fund of that pure and serene light through which, as a medium, he saw every object he designed, and which bathes in a glorious sunshine his radiant pieces.

Cuyp has been surnamed the Dutch Claude, and great as is the praise which this title suggests, it is not exaggerated. We cannot expect to find in him the golden effulgence, or the laughing and silvery waves or the warm air which floats through the columns and porticos of an Italian palace. Cuyp and Claude were the children of two different climates, and worked in their calling at the opposite corners of Europe. The one passed all his life at Rome or at Naples. The other scarcely ever journeyed fifty miles from the town of Dort, and never gazed upon any other sky than that of his native and vapoury Netherlands. It is not, therefore, surprising that the ideas of light which the two painters embodied on their canvas should be so different in kind. Cuyp's sun is of a paler hue; the beam is of a fainter and more delicate gold, but there is, nevertheless, in the air that it irradiates, a certain freshness and purity which invigorate and enrapture the mind. Claude's atmosphere is, on the other hand, hot; it scorches the lungs, and, although it breathes all the precious perfumes of poetry, it superinduces a feeling of listlessness and love.

The climate of Cuyp's masterpieces strengthens and refreshes the mind, creates a necessity for locomotion, and imparts power, activity, and liveliness. And yet, distinct as they undoubtedly are, they are both true to nature in her varying phases. The few degrees latitude which separate the countries in which they respectively lived and flourished, make all the difference in their styles.

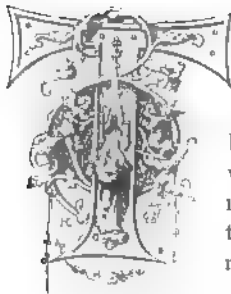
Claude Lorraine found nature abundantly supplied with rare and lovely subjects for contemplation. He had but to stroll along the shores of the Bay of Naples, and the objects of which he was in search immediately presented themselves to his enraptured eye. But in Holland, the days of sunshine and smiles are, like angels' visits, few and far between. The bright orb of day, like the Ormusd of the Persian mythology, is engaged in a perpetual struggle with the powers of darkness; and yet, strange to say, in the *chefs-d'œuvre* of Cuyp we find no traces of this eternal battle between day and night. Strange, but not the less true, this northern artist, whose earliest inspirations were nothing but the fogs of his native fens, was through life a constant and devoted worshipper at the shrine of light; and still more strange, that a Dutch artist of the seventeenth century should, unlike his contemporaries, have sought for the picturesque elsewhere than in confusion, have found sublimity and grandeur in the simplicity of nature, and have secured happiness, while war and bloodshed were the order of the day, in the quiet cultivation of the arts of peace.

Albert Cuyp can scarcely be said to have followed the fashion of the painters of his time, who were, in so many instances, their own engravers, as we know of only eight subjects in aqua fortis which are indisputably the production of this great master. Even these are not found in the catalogues of Adam Bartsch, Huber and Both, Brand, or Winkler; but a glance is sufficient to convince the most incredulous that they can be the work of no other artist: their style, tone, and handling sufficiently identify them. They are all castle scenes, boldly and freely sketched.

Albert Cuyp's *chefs-d'œuvre* are scattered far and wide. But although in Italy and Spain there is not a single picture from his hand, our own country is rich in the productions of the "Dutch Claude." In the National Gallery there is a beautiful landscape by Albert Cuyp, with figures and cattle. The art gallery at Dulwich contains eighteen of his masterpieces, in almost every style—landscapes, with

cattle, sea-pieces, interiors, &c. &c. Hampton Court Palace possesses only one Cuyp—a fruit-piece. The private collections are also well supplied with the *chefs-d'œuvre* of this master. The "View of Dordrecht and of the Banks of the Meuse" is the property of Sir Abraham Hume. In the private collection of George IV. there are four Cuyps; two more are the property of the Duke of Bedford; and three others are in the possession of Sir Robert Peel. The celebrated "View of the Meuse near Dort" is at Bridgewater House; and in the Grosvenor Gallery there are four beautiful Cuyps. The original piece entitled "Starting for a Ride," from which our engraving is copied, forms part of the collection of the Louvre, and has been valued at 30,000 francs, or £1,200. The masterpiece entitled "The Encampment," of which we have given an engraving, is the property of the King of Bavaria.

## JACOB JORDAENS.



TOWARDS the close of the sixteenth century, there suddenly sprung up in the Netherlands a whole brigade of painters. For more than a century no artist of any reputation had flourished in the country which gave birth to that great genius who first invented oil-painting. Italy was the only land in which art had found a permanent home. And so zealously and exclusively was the cultivation of drawing confined to southern Europe, that none could have predicted, in the sixteenth century, the birth—amid the fogs and fens of the Low Countries—of a race of giants in the art of painting, who were destined to equal, if not surpass, the fame of the Italian school.

On the 20th of May, 1593, Jacob Jordaens, the son of a cloth merchant, first saw the light. He was the harbinger of the illustrious band to whose advent we have just alluded, and was born a few years after Rubens, and a few years before Teniers. He passed the first portion of his apprenticeship in the *atelier* of Adam Van Noort; and although the rough style of his old master had few attractions for the aspiring young artist, the graces and refinement of Van Noort's beautiful daughter, Catherine, kept him a willing prisoner at the easel.

All great artists have been enthusiastic admirers of the fair sex; and love has, in nine cases out of ten, exercised an important influence over their fate. While Van Noort, who seems to have been an inveterate soaker, was tippling at the tavern, the maid and her lover found frequent opportunities for courting; so frequent, indeed, that scandal has hinted that they were not married an hour too soon.

Just at this time the fame of Rubens was at its zenith, and Jordaens, without relinquishing the instructions of his father-in-law, became a pupil of the Prince of Painters. He quickly learned to imitate the warm and vigorous style which Rubens had acquired at Venice, and at the age of five-and-twenty he was already an able coadjutor of his master in the execution of the five-and-twenty allegorical pictures which Rubens was painting for Marie de Medicis. It seems probable that Jordaens came himself to France after the completion of that great work, as the twelve signs of the zodiac, which adorn the ceiling of the Museum in the Palace of the Luxembourg, are the productions of his pencil.

But Antwerp was the only city in which our artist found scope for that aspiring genius whose richness and rapture no painter of the Flemish school has ever surpassed, or perhaps even equalled. If, in his *Bacchanals*, Rubens may be considered as the painter *par excellence* of Bacchus and his wanton nymphs, Jordaens is equally the exponent of Silenus and his sensual satyrs. Had Rubens not preceded him, and asserted his indisputable claim to be at once the originator and the chief exponent of the Flemish style, Jordaens' genius would have elaborated a school equally rich, attractive, nervous, and life-like.

It is unfair to accuse Jordaens of imitation. His soul was of a kindred mould to that of Rubens, and they were both of the same character and disposition. The one may be more sublime, more thoughtful, or more deep than the other, who was certainly, on most occasions, ruder, rougher, and coarser than his master; but, when Jordaens tamed down his wildness and refined his execution, his

productions resemble so closely those of Rubens, that they might be mistaken for some of his ruder and coarser pieces. Many a Jordaens has been set down as a Rubens, and many a Rubens as a Jordaens. Rubens occupies, as it were, the *justo-milieu* between Jordaens and Vandyck; although they occasionally exchange places, and run up and down the same scale of tone, colour, and handling.



THE FAMILY CONCERT. FROM A PAINTING BY JORDAENS, IN THE LOUVRE.

Even the refined and aristocratic Vandyck, in his "Silenus, accompanied by Satyrs," has all the coarseness and roughness of Jordaens. Rubens is not a whit the less rude and objectionable in that picture of St. Lievens, where the headsman tears out the tongue of the saint by its roots, while a glorious band of angels, hovering around, are presenting him with the crown of martyrdom. In his colouring Jordaens is even more bright and meretricious than Rubens, and his women surpass those of the





THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. APOLLINA. FROM A PAINTING BY JORDAENS.

Prince of Painters in fleshy development, rounded form, amplitude of figure, and brilliancy of complexion.

At Antwerp, Jordaens achieved an immense popularity. The gross and bulky Flemings, who saw reproduced to the life, on his canvas, the *embonpoint* which they so much admired in their wives and sweethearts, recognised in him a painter to their own taste. As the Venuses of Rubens were so many fac-similes of his two wives, Isabel Brandt and Helen Forman, so those of Jordaens were a continual reproduction of the exuberant figure of Catherine Van Noort.

#### "A FAMILY CONCERT."

The principal figure in this piece, which is almost too life-like in its variety, is the fac-simile of the wife of the artist. Her fair and buxom form—her voluptuous proportions—her inviting expression—her large and melting eyes—her floating, flaxen tresses—her jaunty air—and, above all, the *bonhomie* which beams in every feature of her face—made this picture a great favourite with the Flemings. The appearance of the *père de famille* is almost too goat-like to suit the taste of more refined critics. The lantern jaws and toothless gums of the old lady are also too real to be pleasing; for, as we turn from the luscious and blooming prototype of feminine beauty in its prime, to the lean, wrinkled, and forbidding figure of old age and decrepitude, the certainty of the change that is impending over all of us is far from suggesting pleasing reflections. The child, which is the exact image of its mother, is cherub-like in its fulness and plumpness. Jordaens must have been a thoroughly uxorious husband, and have had his blooming, bouncing wife ever in his mind's eye; for, whether his subject was mythological, Bacchanal, pastoral, historical, or domestic, the figure of Catherine Van Noort, unmistakable in its characteristic *embonpoint*, is always the most prominent. The brightness of her complexion never fades, and the roundness and richness of her form are never impaired; nor does she lose any of the fulness of her lip or of the freshness of her bloom.

From the beginning of time, painters and poets have always immortalised in their productions the women they have loved, and in their style of colouring and composition we recognise the characteristics of their *beau idéal*. The poems of Horace and Ovid breathe an atmosphere of Chloë and Julia. The style of Dante is as mysterious as the character of Beatrice. The painting of Raphael is noble and sublime like his own Fornarina. The genius of Albert Durer is as obstinate and unmanageable as the disposition of the woman who made the painter of Nuremberg so wretched in his domestic economy. Rubens's style is brilliant, luscious, and voluptuous, like the forms of his Isabella or his Helen. Vandyck is as elegant and refined as the graceful beauties of the court of Charles I. Boucher is as meretricious as the ballet dancers of the opera. Poussin as grave and methodical as that philosophy he preferred to any mistress of flesh and blood. While the style of Lesueur is as cold, chaste, and vestal-like as the convent nuns he worshipped with so romantic and unselfish a devotion.

The characteristics of Jordaens' style are freshness, fire, fertility, beauty, and energy. The piece entitled Pan and Syrinx, one of his most celebrated *chefs-d'œuvre*, was painted in six days. The figures are the size of life, and the landscape of which they form part, is of surpassing beauty. Rubens painted during the course of his life three thousand pieces, the half of which have been engraved. Teniers is said to have completed three hundred pictures in one year, and Jordaens in rapidity of execution was on a par with these prolific masters. He often finished at a sitting a figure of the size of life. His fortune increased with his fame. The mansion in which he lived equalled in splendour the palace of a prince; and like Rubens, Vandyck, and Teniers, his art supplied him with the means of gratifying his taste for luxury and magnificence.

More wise than Vandyck, who impoverished himself in his alchemical researches, and more fortunate than Teniers, who ruined himself several times by unsuccessful speculations, Jordaens enjoyed during the whole of his life the means of gratifying his love of splendour. Happy in the friendship of Rubens, and in the popularity his works had achieved among his countrymen and contemporaries, nothing seems to have interrupted the prosperous tenor of his professional career. The piebald horses that he managed with so much grace on the ramparts and the Boulevards, he has immortalised on his canvas; and the splendid attire in which he loved to deck his own portly person he has liberally bestowed upon the distinguished individuals who figure in his *chefs-d'œuvre*.

## "THE MARTYRDOM OF SAINT APOLLINA."

The painters of the time of Jordaens formed a united brotherhood. No cold suspicion, no jealous rivalry, no envious malice severed their mutual confidence and co-operation. Each contributed in his own style the additions or improvements required to make his brother artist's work as perfect as possible. In the market scenes and larders of Sneyders, and in Breughel's finely finished landscapes, the figures most prominent in the foreground are the work of Rubens. In the same way the two Tenierses, father and son, have introduced their small and characteristic figures into almost all the works of their contemporary brother artists. The celebrated picture from which our engraving is copied is a harrowing scene of martyrdom in the style of Rubens's St. Lievens. The headsman, who is carrying into effect the inhuman decree of the persecuting Roman tribunal, that has condemned the Christian saint to martyrdom, is in the act of cutting out the tongue which no tyranny—no terrors—no torture can silence. At the foot of the altar of the heathen deity to whom this heroic lady is sacrificed, because she preferred death to apostacy, and torture to the worship of a senseless idol, is kindled the fatal fire. The impassive expression of the faces of the brutal Roman soldiers, who are watching the progress of the harrowing scene, is a melancholy proof of the hardening effect upon the heart of a continued succession of scenes of human suffering. The brute spectators of the sacrifice, in their sleek and shining coats, while champing the bit and fretting at their constrained inaction, are not less impressed with the horrors which are enacted in their presence, than are their human riders. The fire that will soon put an end to the agony of that courageous heart, is the only merciful element in the whole composition, if we except the supernatural vision of the recording angel, and the cherub band who are about to bear the oppressed and wounded, but still triumphant, spirit of the martyr to the foot of the heavenly cross. The conception of the piece is extremely graphic and arresting, and although we would sooner not harrow our minds or excite our fancy by the contemplation of such dreadful tragedies, we look upon this scene of martyrdom as one of the best *chefs-d'œuvre* of the Flemish school in the Italian style.

Jordaens was not only associated with Rubens in many of his most famous masterpieces, but he often assisted Sneyders and John Fyt in their productions. His fat and frowzy Flemish servants were in good keeping with the glossy game and the silvery fish of Sneyders. The hares, the pheasants, the wild ducks, the boars, and beagles of Fyt were admirably contrasted with the horn-blowing hunters of Jordaens, who seem in the canvas to be literally endowed with animation and breath when compared with the still life around them. But Jordaens, although he willingly and actively lent his assistance to others, never solicited any foreign aid in the composition of his own pieces. His horses, his dogs, his cows, his sheep, his landscapes, and his skies, are all the work of his own hand. His oxen are remarkable for their smooth, sleek, and shining coats; his horses are models of strength and symmetry, and his dogs may dispute the palm with the baying hounds of Sneyders.

In his allegorical triumph of Prince Frederic Henry of Nassau, now among the art treasures of La Haye, the gray horses of the car are really magnificent. This piece, of which there are several engravings in the Belgian galleries, has always been reckoned one of Jordaens's best productions. The idea was evidently borrowed from the allegorical picture in which Rubens had celebrated the triumph of his beloved queen, Mary of Medicis. But if he is indebted to the "prince of painters" for the original conception of his tableau, it is clear that the pupil in the execution of his work has equalled, if not surpassed, the master's production. The fame of Rubens does not, indeed, depend upon the allegorical history of Marie de Medicis, which is considered but of secondary merit in the estimation of connoisseurs.

The gallery of the Louvre contains the most remarkable of all Jordaens' *chefs-d'œuvre*. In "Christ Purifying the Temple" our artist has displayed all the resources of his genius, and blended all the excellences of his style. This picture, which measures thirteen feet by nine, is crowded with figures. On the right is the Messiah, surrounded by men and women, sheep and horned cattle. In front of Him, and on the left, are the terrified desecrators of the temple—male and female—who are escaping "from the wrath to come" with their wares upon their heads, and their counters under their arms. The most prominent of these figures is a stout woman, in a straw bonnet, so stout, indeed, that she seems to weigh, individually, as much as all the rest of the figures collectively. To the left, between the columns of the

sacred edifice, are spectators, who are watching with curiosity the progress of the scene. Above, below, around, and everywhere is consternation, confusion, and characteristic colouring.

"LE ROI BOIT."

The picture known by this strange title, from which our engraving is copied, forms also one of the art treasures of the Louvre, and embraces most of the figures which Jordaens so loved to reproduce



"LE ROI BOIT." FROM A PAINTING BY JORDAENS.

on his canvas. To the right we see the *fac-simile* of his buxom wife, Catherine Van Noort, holding in her arms a chubby little boy, who nestles in his mother's bosom, while she is endeavouring, by voice and action, to give additional effect to the inspiring chorus of "Le Roi Boit," or the king drinks. The aged couple are the same interesting individuals, upon whose personal and artistic merits we dilated in our notice of the "Family Concert," to which this piece seems a kind of accompaniment. Two additional figures have been introduced into the background, and the Antwerp town fool is no



JACOB JORDAENS. FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF.



longer accompanied by his mischievous pet. The picture is almost too much crowded with objects, but they are so well and artistically grouped, that the exuberance is rather pleasing than perplexing. The piece has been highly valued by connoisseurs; and at the sale of Randon de Bosset's effects in 1777, it fetched 4,801 francs, or rather more than £190. "Le Roi Boit" has been often engraved, but the best impression of it was made by Paul Pontius. In criticising the merit of this favourite production, De Piles remarks: "What a wonderful man would Jordaens have been, if, instead of painting classical and historical subjects, he had devoted himself exclusively to such productions as 'Le Roi

Boit,' of which the subject matter was so familiar to him that he has reproduced it in several different styles."

Rubens died in 1640 and Vandyck in 1641, and Jordaens was left at Antwerp without a rival. At the date of the untimely extinction of those two great luminaries in art, our painter was at the height of his reputation. The pieces he produced at this epoch of his career are innumerable. Enterprising, active, and experienced in the art of finish, he covered whole acres of canvas with his gigantic figures, in an incredibly short space of time. So popular were his pieces, that the princes of Germany and the *millionaires* of the Low Countries vied with each other in procuring a *chef-d'œuvre* of this favourite painter, and no church or château was considered complete without its "Jordaens."

He spent freely what he earned so rapidly. But lavish as was his expenditure, his enormous profits enabled him to maintain undiminished the splendour of his establishment to the close of his long and successful career.

In the year 1659 his wife died, and his grief at her loss paralysed for a time all his energies. He recovered by degrees from the shock; but although he survived his gentle helpmate nearly twenty years, he was too true to her memory to enter, like Rubens, into a second matrimonial alliance. He lived to the advanced age of eighty-four, and his death, which took place on the 18th of October, 1678, occurred on the same day as that of his favourite child Ann Catherine. They were both buried in the protestant church of Pütte, a village on the frontier of Holland. His sepulchral monument was restored some few years ago by William II., king of the Netherlands.

Jordaens was, notwithstanding his fancy for image painting, a protestant. Although born of Roman Catholic parents, and educated in that religion of form and ceremony, he soon after his marriage with Catherine Van Noort recanted his errors, and embraced a purer, a simpler, and a holier faith.

### HIS MERITS.

In speaking of Jordaens' style and standing, among the painters of his time, the biographer De Piles remarks: "All he wanted was to have seen the sun of Italy." It is quite true that this assumed qualification for a first-rate artist was wanting in him; but in our opinion it was a fortunate thing for Jordaens that he never *did* see the sun of Italy. There are many artists to whom Italy, with all her prestige, is a stumbling-block. Originality of style, when it is powerfully developed and distinctively marked, is, with all its imperfection, very preferable to a discipline and routine which go against the grain, and to an imitative mannerism which cramps the natural inspiration. Taillasson, a man whose criticism is quite impartial, says: "There is no doubt that Italy might have given a higher finish to the drawings of Jordaens, but it could never have conferred upon him that aspiring genius for which he was so remarkable." In fact, the discipline of the Italian School would in all probability have drawn him farther and farther from his own natural style. Nature had endowed him with a highly susceptible organisation, which made him an excellent exponent of commonplace truths, and which enabled him to describe with a precision and energy quite original, all curious and comic subjects. No one has painted with equal effect, tone, style, character, and colour those round and ruddy faces which are at once suggestive of good health, good cheer, good humour, and good disposition. There is not in any of his compositions that artificiality which is to be noticed in some of the works of painters of even higher pretensions. It was his constant endeavour to reproduce what he actually saw. He painted nature; and whatever might be the subject which employed his pencil, his invariable custom was to delineate faithfully that which had been undertaken. Whether it was a drinking party of rough boers, a picture of heroic martyrdom, or the representation of some classic scene, the energy of the artist was exerted to make the work truthful. It has been remarked that the powers of Jordaens were better adapted for fabulous subjects, satyrs and animals, or the festive scenes of tumultuous revelry, than the grave and decorous arrangement of sacred subjects, or the dignified delineation of history. But this is not to be received without many exceptions in Jordaens' favour.

## JACOB RUYSDAEL.



RAY'S line, applicable to so many great poets and painters, was particularly so to the singular genius whose merits as an artist, and fortunes as a man, we are about to expatiate upon—

“Melancholy marked him for her own.”

There is a sublime melancholy which expresses itself in paintings like Ruysdael's, and poetry like Young's “Night Thoughts” and Byron's “Childe Harold.” This is a feeling quite distinct from that petty spite against fate and that irritability attendant on high aspirations and small powers (when that unhappy union does occur), from which springs what some dignify by the name of melancholy, but which is only ill-temper. It is about two hundred years ago that Jacob Ruysdael was attacked by that vague, inexplicable sorrow which Albert Durer immortalised in that noble engraving called “Melancholy.” This sentiment, or rather passion, which art till then had never attempted to realise and portray, and which only a few choice and gifted spirits had felt, was one which followed our great painter through life and to the gates of death, at a time when so many great artists saw but nature's sunny side, and like

Berghem revelled only in her happiest moods, her bright lights, and rich colours. Ruysdael, secretly a prey to a vague and lofty disquietude, was seeking in nature's fastnesses the unknown, the unattainable, the hidden Ida of his own great mournful heart!

Among the monotonous sand-hills of Kennmer, on the flat marshes of Holland, and at the foot of wild Norwegian mountains, he tried to discover and to reveal himself to that great Master Spirit and presiding Deity which Heathens professed to believe in, and which Christians worship as the Creator, the Almighty, the living God.

Houbraken informs us that Jacob Ruysdael practised as a physician before he became a painter. According to the same authority he was born at Harlem, in 1640, though other records give 1635. His father was a manufacturer of ebony picture frames, then much in vogue in the Low Countries; and Jacob Ruysdael's predilection for painting was in a great measure owing to the intimate relations which his parent had with some of the first artists of the day.

The profits of his trade enabled Ruysdael *père* to give his son a liberal education, who, if we may credit Houbraken, made so rapid a progress in Latin, and other branches of polite literature, that he very early obtained a diploma, and performed with great success some difficult surgical operations.

At the critical moment of his life he was seized with a mania for painting. An entry in the catalogue of a sale at Dort in 1720, which runs thus: “A beautiful landscape with a waterfall, by *Doctor* Jacob Ruysdael,” proves that he had made considerable progress as an artist before he had given up the profession of medicine. That Ruysdael had, when quite young, acquired the elements of drawing, and even painting, is more than probable, since the medical student must have been in almost daily intercourse with Wouvermans, Laer, Wynants, and the other artists who frequented his father's shop. History is, however, silent as to the time at which he abandoned physic for painting. According to Descamps he produced pictures which astonished every one who saw them, when he was only twelve years of age. A man of Ruysdael's mind might have been as expert with the brush as the lancet, but it is more than probable that to enhance his reputation his friends have attributed to him, as proofs of his precocious genius, some of the productions of his brother Solomon, who was twenty years older than our artist.

Talent of the highest order is sometimes slow in developing itself; while youthful prodigies often disappoint, in after life, the expectations that have been formed of them. We are, therefore, rather inclined to believe the account given by Houbraken, in preference to the marvellous stories told by Descamps of Ruysdael's early performances. There is, moreover, a contradiction in facts, which is

fatal to the credibility of Descamps' narrative. If, as this biographer informs us, at twelve years of age Ruysdael already painted masterpieces, at what age must he have been inspired with that wonderful taste for art of which Descamps speaks? But this is not the only error into which he has fallen,



J.M.W. TURNER. RAIN, STEAM, AND GREAT RAILWAY BRIDGE.

in his sketch of Ruysdael's history; and it is really distressing to find a man of his experience making an assertion so wild and absurd as that the young doctor studied attentively the works of Berghem, because they were both of *kindred genius*. Now, if there were ever two painters entirely distinct—or rather, we would say, opposed—in style, those two painters were Ruysdael and Berghem. In the pas-





THE WATERFALL. FROM A PAINTING BY RUYSDAEL.

total pieces of the latter, liveliness, exuberance, grace, and gaiety are the distinguishing features ; while a sublime and impressive grandeur characterises the productions of the former. There is no period of the life of either in which it is possible to discover, in the touch of these two masters, the resemblance

about which Descamps prates so foolishly. Ruysdael's scale of colouring is altogether different from that of Berghem. Gay and gaudy tints are his aversion; so much so, indeed, that he has made no use of red in his *tableaux*. The peasant girls, who figure in his pastorals with flowery kirtles and red petticoats, were introduced by his friend, and are by no means in keeping with the sombre and serious tints of Ruysdael's landscape. It is, moreover, easy to see that his peculiar style and handling are as wide as the poles asunder, from the brilliant, fanciful, and easy execution of his illustrious countryman and contemporary.

It is just possible that Jacob Ruysdael, who lived at Harlem with his brother Solomon, yielded, as he watched the effect which the latter produced with his brush, to the inspirations of his own genius, and borrowed, in the first instance, from his brother's canvas, colouring, touch, and tone. This would account for the hardness of the handling of his early pieces. His real master—the painter, indeed, whose *chefs-d'œuvre* might almost be mistaken for his own in the choice of the subjects and the manner of treating them—was Aldert Van Everdingen. The pupil, it is true, very soon outstripped his preceptor; but that the quick fire of genius should get the start of the dull promptings of routine, is no surprising or uncommon occurrence. Once initiated in the mechanical details of his art, genius did the rest.

“A FOREST SCENE.” (FIGURES BY BERGHEM.)

This forest glade would have been more in keeping with Ruysdael's usual style, if Berghem had not introduced the figures on the foreground. They may add grace and gaiety to the effect of the whole, but they destroy the Ruysdael character of the piece. To the left, the gnarled and branchless oak looks desolate among the green foliage of its younger *confrères* of the forest. Either the woodman or the weather has committed fearful havoc among its once spreading boughs—more probably the former. The aged tree still exhibits signs of life, and puts forth a few scattered leaves from its mutilated trunk. Had lightning done the mischief, the oak must have perished.

“The tainted branches of a tree,  
If looped with care a strength may give,  
By which the rest shall bloom and live  
All greenly fresh and wildly free;  
But if the lightning in its wrath  
The waving boughs with fury scathe,  
The massy trunk the ruin feels,  
And ne'er again a leaf reveals.”

To the right is another oak that still preserves its leafy honours. Both these trees are painted, we will not say to the life, for other painters have described trees as naturally as Ruysdael, but with a certain grace and beauty which seem to inspire them with a language of their own. They are dumb, inanimate objects, invested by the magician with a charm which arrests and fascinates us—nay more, they seem to be endowed with a poetical eloquence which finds its way to the hearts of all who have sufficient imagination and feeling to appreciate the merits of the piece.

Printsellers have often among their collections an engraving after Ruysdael, entitled “View of the Environs of Rome.” Such a production would induce a belief that the artist had visited Italy, although engravings are not always credible evidences of facts. A closer inspection, however, of the engraving to which we allude will convince the connoisseur that there is nothing on the face of it to warrant the title that has been given to it. The landscape is more like a production of Constable's than of Claude's. The sky is wintry, and covered with clouds about to descend in showers. No classical ruins announce the proximity of “the Eternal City.” Some cavaliers are rowing in a boat on the canal; but there is nothing characteristic in their dress, which is certainly as un-Italian as the landscape itself. This engraving, then, is no proof that Ruysdael visited Italy. Not one of his pieces bears the stamp of Italian discipline. On the contrary, they are all of a green and sombre tint, and are always surmounted by a sky of a slaty hue. The rays of sunshine which lighted with smiles his sombre pieces are only the capricious beams which now and then penetrate through the foggy veil, and warm the marshes of the Drenthe or the pale and muddy moors that spread far and wide along the banks of the Zuyder Zee. That Ruysdael should never have quitted his native country

seems scarcely credible, though Descamps declares most positively that such was the case, and that Berghem and he copied nothing in their pieces but the views round about Amsterdam. With respect to the former, there is no doubt that he visited Rome, and that he derived from an Italian source his classic style, and acquired from the august "mother of arts and arms" his knowledge of Greek architecture, and his familiarity with those historic ruins which greatly enhanced the value of his pastoral pictures. And although his name is not found enrolled in the register of the illustrious members of the academy of *La Bent*, we have other proofs quite as convincing of his residence at Rome.

The internal evidence of Ruysdael's foreign travels is quite as convincing. How in the neighbourhood of Amsterdam could he have discovered mountains so lofty that their summits shoot high above the belt of cloud that floats around their waists? He must have seen mountains as high as that to which the poet has compared the Man of God.

"As some tall cliff that rears its awful form,  
Swells through the vale, and midway meets the storm;  
Though round its base some darkening clouds be spread,  
Eternal sunshine settles on its head."

How should he have seen, except in his wanderings abroad, those lakes whose banks are thickly covered with pines, or those cataracts and waterfalls which exist only among the lofty regions in which lie the sources of such mighty rivers as the Danube, the Rhine, or the Rhone?

The capital of the United Provinces is situated, as we all know, in the most level country in the whole world. Meadows, marshes, moors, intersecting canals, and boundless seas only separated from the main-land by an artificial dyke, form the surrounding views. To say, therefore that Ruysdael copied in his landscapes nothing but scenes in the neighbourhood of Amsterdam, is a proof of great ignorance, or simplicity amounting to stupidity. There is no doubt that he travelled through Norway and Westphalia, and that in the mountainous regions of those two countries he learned to describe nature in her wild and wayward moods, and became what Houbraken justly defines him to have been—a painter *sui generis*.

Restless and sullen—wooing solitude, and ever seeking the seclusion and silence of the wood or the roar of the cataract—Ruysdael had for his friend a painter whose character was exactly the reverse of his own. This friend was Nicholas Berghem. So true is it, that sympathy of mind does not depend upon similarity of taste. Berghem was a man of mild, genial, and lively disposition. Ruysdael's senior by ten years, his reputation, his style, and above all, the productions of his genius warranted him in offering his advice to his juvenile friend. But these two masters, great as they both were, had a genius so distinct in kind, that though they were united in friendship, they were opposed in art.

Berghem never understood Ruysdael. There was between them the same difference that there is between a ballad and an elegy. On the verdant sward of Ruysdael's sombre forests, Nicholas Berghem would introduce, much to the delight of amateurs without taste or discernment, gay and gaudily dressed village maids, with uninteresting drovers whose herd of lowing oxen are strongly at variance with the solemnity of the scene. Such an incongruity destroys the characteristic sentiment of the Ruysdael landscapes—pieces in which the secluded loneliness and sacred silence are violated by homely figures who desecrate the *tableau* with their coarse wit and wanton jest.

#### "THE WATERFALL."

This is the kind of scene that Ruysdael loved to contemplate. The roar of the torrent was music to his ear, and the ivy round the ruined turret more inspiring to his fancy and pleasing to his eye than the choicest scenes of modern luxury and refinement. The painting of "The Waterfall," from which our engraving is copied, is a piece of great labour and study. In his criticism upon this celebrated *chef-d'œuvre*, Houbraken remarks, "He is almost unique in this style, as few painters, if any, have ever been able to describe so well the sparkling transparency of the water." This simple eulogy gives us but a very inadequate idea of the merits of "The Waterfall." Every traveller familiar with such a scene in mountainous regions, will appreciate this production of the great master. At the foot of those rugged rocks the water falls, foams, twists, turns, and eddies round the fragments that it bears

along in its headlong course. From the right, from the left, and from the background of the piece, the element rushes down into the abyss which devours it. As we gaze on the picture, we fancy that we hear the roar of the cataract as it dashes over the rocks, glides along the channel it has hollowed in its stony bed, or rebounds in sparkling masses from the rough bottom of the ravine. The dark and chilling vapour it exhales seems to moisten the skin. To the left, upon the platform of one of the rocks which encircle this cataract, stands a fragile hut, reared upon the very brink of the boiling abyss. The frailty of this tenement, built by some hermit who preferred the rugged face of nature to the treacherous smile of man, is in startling contrast with the mighty fury of the waters which perpetually besiege its base. The sky is murky, the air is heavy with moisture. Birds of an ominous size are ploughing with sable wings the realms of space. The foliage is motionless, because the wind cannot



OUTSKIRTS OF THE FOREST. FROM A PAINTING BY RUYSDAEL.

penetrate into that narrow and embedded recess. The vegetation around is active and vigorous. Wherever even a few inches of soil cover the barrenness of the rock, there a tree has struck root.

Of all the great masters of the Dutch school, Ruysdael is the one upon whose productions fame has dawned most slowly. We must almost come down to our own time before we find that they have realised the prices to which their merit entitled them. Even at the beginning of the present century, when a "Landscape with figures," by Van der Velde, fetched 29,000 francs, "The Waterfall" was sold for 3,200. At the sale, however, of the Cardinal Fesch, at Rome, in 1845, "The Waterfall" fetched 5,000 francs, and "The Outskirts of the Forest," 7,000.

#### "OUTSKIRTS OF THE FOREST."

Ruysdael is in painting what the writer of epitaphs and elegies is in poetry. For him the most solitary glen and the most lonely glade have a charm that inspires his pencil. He seems to have been of a kindred spirit with our own poet, and to have translated on canvas the feelings which Byron



THE RUSTIC BRIDGE. FROM A PAINTING BY RUYSDAEL.



THE CORNFIELD. FROM A PAINTING BY RUYSDAEL.

breathed, two centuries later, in song, in words which seem to give verbal utterance to the ideas with which "Melancholy" inspired Ruysdael, and which he has so often reproduced upon his canvas :—

"There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,  
There is a rapture on the lonely shore ;  
There is society, where none intrudes,  
By the deep sea, and music in its roar.  
I love not man the less, but nature more,  
From these our interviews ; in which I steal  
From all I may be, or have been before,  
To mingle with the Deity, and feel  
What I cannot express, but cannot all conceal."

If ever he could find a spot unfrequented or unknown by man, where nature seemed to mourn over her isolation, there he took his stand. Such is the scene before us—the outskirts of a forest. The place is certainly not untenanted by human figures. But, although the tiny spire of the distant steeple proves that we must not compare this solitude with that which

"Never echoed the sound of a church-going bell,  
Nor smiled when a Sabbath appeared,"

there is a loneliness and stillness about the place which suited well the painter's predilection for seclusion, and which would almost have gratified the wish of him who, disgusted with the worldliness or wickedness of his race, exclaimed :—

"Oh ! for a lodge in some vast wilderness,  
Some boundless contiguity of space !"

The light on the horizon has a very pleasing effect upon the eye ; and the demi-tints of the middle distance are most artistically managed.

Ruysdael seems to have found a kind of morbid satisfaction in melancholy, and to have verified the truth of that remark of La Montaigne, who, although he never experienced it, seems to have understood the feeling. "I imagine that even the delusions of melancholy," said he, "have a kind of delicate relish." No sudden or startling effects, no thunder and lightning, hail, storm, or tempest, are ever employed as agents by Ruysdael in producing the melancholy with which he loves to infect his admirers. To produce this feeling, a lofty pine displaying its tent-like foliage on the summit of some barren rock, is sufficient. The background of the landscape, wild and woody, is lost in the mists of the horizon. But the pine in the foreground rises lonely and majestic, and stands out in full relief against the vault of heaven.

#### "THE CORNFIELD."

The union in one piece of the handiwork of two masters, however great they may have been in their respective styles, has seldom answered the expectations of either. In the case of Ruysdael, the effect of the figures introduced by Berghem, so much at variance with the solemnity of his sombre scenes, was, as we just now observed, always disagreeable. Much rather would we see, as in the characteristic painting of "The Cornfield," from which our engraving is copied, those little figures, drawn perhaps rudely and carelessly, of which we perceive but the distant and indistinct outline, than the most elaborate productions of Berghem. These shadowy forms do but recall to the mind of the spectator the existence of man, and without disturbing the harmony of the picture, they allow his imagination to revel, as it were, in its loneliness. The light in this picture which illumines the middle distance, while the foreground and horizon are dark and lowering, is admirably managed. The undulating nature of the ground is scarcely in keeping with the character of the country round about Amsterdam, and it seems more than probable that the sketch of this piece was taken during one of Ruysdael's frequent tours.

His clouds are always the most remarkable features of his picture. They represent the loveliest forms and most brilliant colours in nature. Sometimes they are rushing madly through space and casting along the plain their fantastic shadow, and sometimes they wend their way slowly and majestically across the blue firmament of heaven. The illusion is so complete that the eye follows them in the expectation of seeing them disappear in the distance. In his clouds, indeed, Ruysdael has never been surpassed or even equalled ; and magnificent as are the skies of Van de Velde and Dujardin, they fall short of the characteristic beauty of Ruysdael's, who excelled all his contemporaries in repre-

senting those brilliant flashes of sunshine in which the god of light breaks through the envious mists that obscured his glory, and banishes from his presence the heavy clouds that darkened with impending storms the face of early spring. This sunshine between two showers, this pale and passing smile of nature in her tearful mood, was the delight of the artist. It relieved for a moment the morbid melancholy of his disposition, and in describing it he has displayed a genius of the highest order.

We see an admirable illustration of the truth of our criticism in "The Cornfield." But there is nothing more wonderful in this style in the whole *répertoire* of the Dutch School than that piece of Ruysdael's entitled "The Burst of Sunshine," known also among artists by the name of "The Thicket." The effect beggars all description. No words can indeed convey an adequate idea of the merit of a picture entirely composed of a great black thicket, and of a sandy pathway gilded by a sudden burst of sunshine. The *chef-d'œuvre* of "The Thicket" is among the art treasures of the Louvre, and has been valued at something like £500.

#### "THE RUSTIC BRIDGE."

Valenciennes accuses our landscape painter of following the example of many inferior artists, who from some abstract part borrow their idea of the whole, and take for their models in trees and rocks only little boughs or small fragments. These artists, says Valenciennes, think that they are imitating nature in their productions, but they are grievously mistaken, for the more accurately they copy the nature they have chosen for their model, the more they add to the deception of their picture. Just as the proportions of a child are quite unlike those of a man, so the formation of the branch is altogether different from that of the entire tree. The texture is also quite distinct, and even the merest tyro in the art of drawing knows well the difference.

Ruysdael may possibly have laid himself open to this charge through having once or twice, when unable to leave his atelier, adopted for convenience this mode of tree drawing, but to aver that his trees are for the most part copied from fragments or fagots is a gross calumny. Ruysdael has always had a great reputation for tree drawing. The distinctive pattern of the leaf separates in his pieces the trees of one class from those of another, and his firm and pointed touch regulates the motion of the branches, and brings into relief the silvery tone of the trunk. This is most perceptible in the white and uniform bark of the birch and the beech, which makes itself seen even through the thickest foliage. If Ruysdael was ever really guilty of the error with which Valenciennes reproaches him, it is rather in his aqua-fortis engravings than in his pictures. In the engraving entitled "The Hut on the Hill," the uprooted tree which lies to the right extremity of the piece, and reaches the limits of the foreground with its crooked bough, is scarcely in keeping with the proportions of the remaining objects in the picture, and might perhaps have been copied from a branch. But if such a license is excusable in an aqua-fortis engraving, where the object of the painter has been to describe at once, and in a rapid sketch, his idea or his reminiscence of a scene rather than to elaborate a finished and accurate painting, it would be inexcusable as a general rule. Happily for Ruysdael, such errors, if he ever made them at all, were of rare occurrence. As, however, "The Rustic Bridge," from which our engraving is copied, is one of his aqua-fortis engravings, we will repeat the concise and impartial criticism of Adam Bartsch. "His engravings," says Bartsch, "show the wonderful quickness and lightness of the author's hand. So light and sketchy are they, that they seem rather inklings than drawings. His leaves are bold outlines consisting of successive 'zigzags,' which are very effective in representing nature."

It is a mistake to imagine that forms should be all clearly defined. Too much accuracy in this respect gives mannerism to the style, as we see in our own Pre-raphælite productions. "The Rustic Bridge" has evidently been sketched during a moment of inspiration.

It is universally acknowledged that Ruysdael's sea-pieces are *chef-d'œuvres*. The Zuyder Zee, six miles from Amsterdam, was his favourite model, and the whole coast of Holland (though flat in itself) enabled him to study Father Ocean in all his varied moods—now foaming with wrath and lashing himself into ungovernable fury—now dark, sullen, and still as the brooding passions of hate and jealousy—now clear as truth, and tranquil as virtue—now dimpled and smiling as happy love or an infant's dream.

The Dutch school boasts several great masters eminent for maritime subjects, but Ruysdael's sea-

pieces have a character and style of their own, and have little in common with those of any other artists. And with everything he touched, the stamp of his genius is upon them, and marks them unmistakably his.

Although he loved to gaze on every change that gently heaved or wildly agitated the azure bosom of the deep, it was only in her hours of gloom or tempest that he delighted to portray her.



THE BEACH. FROM A PAINTING BY J.M.W. TURNER.

Ruysdael did not seek to reproduce the smooth and glassy sea which John Van Goyen so loved to paint. Not his the huge, foaming, frothy waves of the tempests of Bakhuisen (nautical dramas in themselves); still less the exquisite finish, and delicate exactitude, the enchanting reality of Willem Van de Velde. Ruysdael's waves have a character of gloom, depth, and solemnity,—a something more



threatening than destructive. His tempests, like the passions of some human hearts, have a sort of brooding, smouldering wrath—suggestive of dread outbreaks yet to come; they fill the mind with an almost unbearable distress and a solemn dread, such as Rembrandt's pictures inspire. In Ruysdael's celebrated painting of



THE BEACH. FROM A PAINTING BY RUYSDAEL.

"THE BEACH."

The magnificent boldness of the sky is in strong and masterly contrast with the tameness of land and water scenery. There is nothing very interesting in the picture, except its reality. The dwarf sand-hills and the middle distance give effect to the bold foreground, and the horizon dark with the

coming storm (which is evidently brewing in the cloudy skies) ; the crisped waves freshening in the breeze that foretells a storm, have a feathery transparency positively refreshing ; and, amid the pebbles, sea-weed, and rank grass, are quiet pools in which the clouds are mirrored, and where we almost fancy we can see the crabs sidle, and the limpets stick. Boldly, yet delicately defined on the verge of the horizon, we descry towers, a steeple, and a brace of genuine Dutch trees. There are fishing-boats too, one almost touching the beach ; the others, "fine by degrees and beautifully less." A bustle and animation is given to the scene by several groups of figures endowed with a sort of life—not the still-life so common to figures introduced to animate a landscape, but figures which really almost seem to move and breathe. One thing alone we cannot understand : where are the sea-mews and curlews which would constantly flap their white wings against that inky sky, and whirl in eddies above those heaving waves ? A few sea-birds are wanted to complete this noble picture of "The Beach."

There is one sea-piece by Ruysdael in the Gallery of the Louvre, and a noble one it is—a poem in itself ! It represents several fishing-boats in a squall. The desert coast has no species of haven, refuge, or shelter, but a wooden jetty shaken by the violent onset of the waves. The colour of the water, tawny at the approach of the hurricane, is perfectly true to nature. The waves, as they break and dash on, bend the long reeds which have taken root at the very foundation of the piles and piers of the jetty. They twist and twine and blend with the clear though rushing waves,—lead-coloured and inky clouds hide the light of day. It is rather the presentiment of a storm than the storm itself. One does not see the mariners shipwrecked, but one feels that this must be their fate. Imagination exaggerates their peril, struck by the intense emotion conveyed to the spectator's mind by the magic power of the painter's genius. Other artists have seen and depicted hurricanes, shipwrecks, tempests ; but Ruysdael has lent to these ghastly and terrible marine tragedies a pathos truly sublime, and this he has done by mixing with the thunders of the storm, and the hoarse roar of the waves, the voice of his own heart and the sob of human sympathy, so dear to melancholy. He has partially illustrated on his canvas some of the magnificent ideas of the great poet of our own times :—

"Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean, roll !  
A thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain ;  
Man marks the earth with ruin, his control  
Stops with the shore, upon the watery plain ;  
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain  
A vestige of man's ravage, save his own ;  
When in a moment, like a drop of rain,  
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,  
Without a shroud, unknelt, uncoffined, and unknown !"

#### "THE LAKE."

This pond, or pool, like many in our own picturesque and beautiful island, is a miniature lake in transparency and extent. It has actually islands studded with trees, that mirror their fair forms and feathery foliage in the "glassy, cool, translucent wave."

This is a scene that makes one dream of a hot summer noon, when,

"The world forgetting, by the world forgot,"

it would be so delightful to repair with some dear one, or even that sweet companion—a well-chosen book, to lie in the shade of those trees, on that emerald sod freshened by the vicinity of that cool crystal pond. "The pensive cattle," who seem to be enjoying all that forms the paradise of the cow—sweet herbage, the slaking and delicious wave, cool shade, and a foot-bath—take nothing from the solitude, and add much to the pastoral beauty of the scene ; and even the disciple of old Isaak Walton is too absorbed by his dreamy sport to be much in the way of those of "Nature's lovers who delight to stray by her fair side," and dream that "none are near."

The sky is in keeping with the fresh, cool, verdant aspect of a scene of early summer—light fleecy clouds, "like spirits floating o'er an infant's dream," animate the blue expanse, and enliven the fair surface of the tiny lake. And if in so fair a scene, a withered tree (struck by the lightning's flash, or the slow touch of insidious disease, the canker or the blight) stands in strong, dreary contrast to that flush of beauty, has it not a deep moral ? Was it not emblematic of the melancholy man, the

great painter, whose heart was as that blighted tree, who could appreciate and reproduce, but could not enjoy beauty? and have we not all, in our outward lives or inner selves, some such withered tree, in the shape of a memory, or a haunting grief, to sadden the brightest scene, and remind us of decay and death? With regard to the others that form this rich cluster, they are flourishing and full of life and leaf; we behold the roots so well watered. But the wonder excited is owing to the magic touch that renders this scene perfection in all its effect and all its detail.

In the picture before us, let us examine the tree to the right, that young and vigorous oak. If this colossal tree is handed down to posterity in all its beauty, it is owing to the transparent shades in which the branches seem to take their rise, and to the sombre tints of colour to which we defy even artists to give a name. How exquisitely the fissures in the bark are represented, and how light and elegant is the crowning tuft of foliage! Houbraken says that Ruysdael was resolved never to marry; that he foreswore matrimony and all its joys in order to devote himself to his old father. Houbraken has not our English notions about "single-blessedness." He speaks as if Ruysdael had sacrificed certain wedded felicity to filial love. But we doubt whether the self-centred, morose, reserved Jacob Ruysdael would not, by marriage, have robbed his life of its peace without adding much to its pleasure. Perhaps on this much-vexed question, Dr. Johnson's opinion—though somewhat vague and oracular—is the wisest: "Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures." Ruysdael could endure pain, he could not enjoy or appreciate pleasure; *ergo*, he was best single. If it be true that his love for his old father induced him to live a bachelor, it seems unlikely that he was ever tempted to undertake any very long journeys. The bright glowing skies of Italy would not have suited his gloomy mind; the dazzling radiance of southern suns would have been torture to his actual and mental vision. And yet some of his biographers persist that he did visit Rome with Berghem.

Ruysdael, whose masterpieces have made the fortunes of many picture dealers, and whose genius delights all true lovers of art, lived and died poor! How can the lover of nature and of poetry woo and win the favours of Dame Fortune? He was a true poet; and, like a true poet, he lived poor and died young. The 16th of November, 1681, saw Ruysdael (great and immortal genius that he was) close his melancholy eyes for ever on a world to whose intellectual delights his pencil had contributed so largely, but which had never revealed a charm to him lively enough to make him feel, as genius generally does, the pleasure of living in so fair a world.

## CORNELIUS BEGA.



REGINALITY in style is preferable to the greatest proficiency in finish. Cornelius Bega may excel his distinguished original Adrian Van Ostade in "finish," but he is after all only an imitator. Like Cornelius Dusart, Anthony Goebauw, and Michael de Musscher, he was a disciple of that school of painting which the genius of Van Ostade had elaborated for itself. And although he may have seized his master's style more characteristically, and have reproduced it more faithfully, he is less free and fearless than Dusart, and is more of a mannerist than the other pupils of the same master.

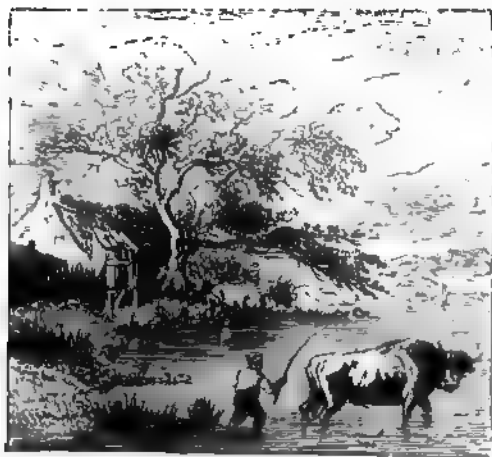
In his aqua-fortis engravings he can scarcely be accused either of finish or affectation. His peasant forms are so roughly designed, so thick set, short, and round-backed, that they seem rather a caricature upon the human race than the copies of existing models. And yet in comparing Bega with Van Ostade, we cannot but own that hideous as the latter has made his subjects, he has copied nature more faithfully than his pupil, and that his ugly old crones, and still uglier old carles are the fac-similes of figures he had actually seen. The pupil, on the other hand, was a less inspired priest at the altar of truth, and in his endeavour to civilise his models he has invested them with a kind of vulgar refinement, which is foreign to his master's style, and has certainly no existence in nature.



JACOB RUYSDAEL.

In spite of these drawbacks, Bega is a good painter, an excellent engraver, a charming artist, and a great favourite with all amateurs. His merits, indeed, entitled him to the honour of a biographical memoir; but, much as his masterpieces have been admired, and great as is the value set upon them in all the principal galleries of Europe, we know but little of the events of his life.

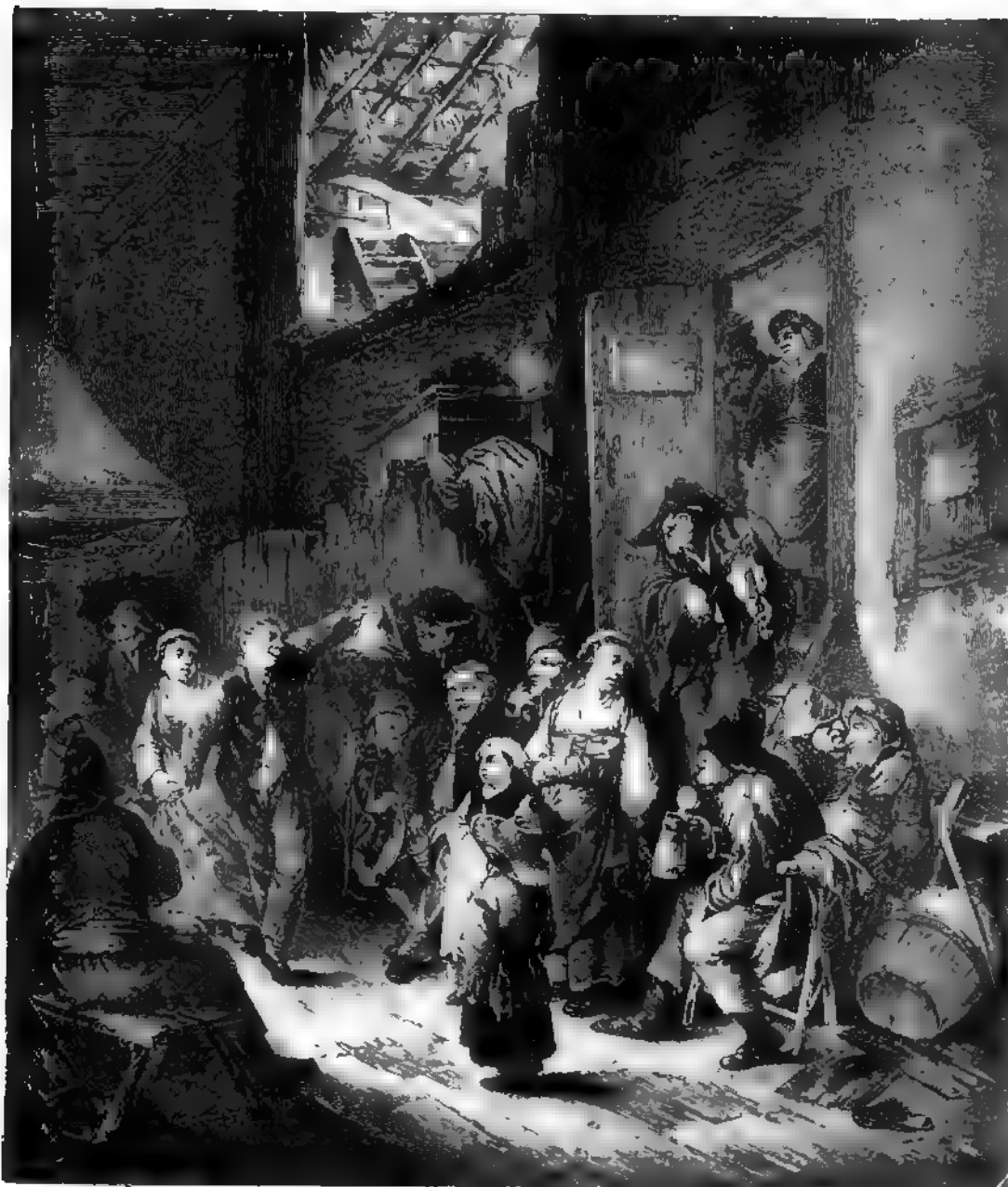
Harlem, that prolific nursery of genius, where so many painters, of the highest reputation, first saw the light, was also the birthplace of Bega. The date of his nativity was somewhere about the year 1620. The name of his mother was Mary Cornelisz. She was the daughter of the artist Cornelius Cornelisz, better known among painters by the name of Cornelius Van Harlem.



Bega's father was a carver in wood, of the name of Begyn. But Cornelius, in his youth, according to Houbraken, showed a more decided taste for philandering than fine art; and his father, who was a strict censor of morals, disgusted at his profligacy, turned him out of doors. The young artist, in revenge, dropped the name of Begyn, and took that of Bega, as he was determined to wear no longer the badge of a father who had disowned him. Descamps, on the other hand, declares that Bega changed his name to please his father. He would have pleased him better by changing his course of

life. Without attempting to reconcile such conflicting testimony, we will at once make the most of the scanty records of Bega's professional career.

Van Ostade admitted him as a pupil in his *atelier* under the name of Bega; and, as he was of a very



THE ALE-HOUSE HOP. FROM A PAINTING BY CORNELIUS BEGA.

impressionable nature, he soon received the indelible stamp of his master's genius. He was of a confiding, yielding disposition—easily led, because he had no self-reliance. His ruling passions were love and art. In the pursuit of pleasure—or rather those sensual gratifications which he dignified with the name—he frittered away all his genuine affections; and, in copying the paintings of others, he

destroyed all traces of original genius. His death was the most interesting and remarkable circumstance of his life. In 1664, the woman whom he loved most tenderly was attacked by the plague, then ravaging Europe. Deaf to every warning, the painter entered the infected room, and watched by the bedside of his *inamorata*. Although she was at the last gasp, he wished to fold her in his arms, and take his leave of her in a final embrace. But the doctor and his mother would not permit it. They forced him away from the fatal bed; and, as he could not break loose from them, he took a long pole, one end of which he presented to his mistress, who touched it three times with her parched and dying lips, while he sent her three fervent kisses along the same wooden conductor. Houbraken says, that the shock and sorrow he experienced from this loss were so great, that he was himself attacked by the plague, and died a few days after, anno Domini 1664, in the forty-fifth year of his age.

This proof of devotion, so intense, self-sacrificing, and fearless, recalls the passionate address of the patriot poet to Erin:—

“ Oh ! for what was love made, if it shine not the same  
In joy and in sorrow—in glory and shame ?  
I know not—I ask not—if guilt's in that heart ;  
I but know that I love thee whatever thou art.

“ Thou hast called me thine angel in moments of bliss,  
And thine angel I'll prove 'mid the horrors of this ;  
Through the furnace unshrinking thy steps to pursue,  
And shield thee and save thee, or perish there too.”

In Bega's *répertoire* we meet once more all the models of Adrian Van Ostade. His peasants are, however, less preposterous than those of his master, and far more civilised. They have an air about them of gaiety and independence which is widely removed from the grave kindliness of Van Ostade's faces. His women have a way of holding themselves upright and of walking, which makes them almost endurable, and gives them some claim to human sympathy. The phases of refinement we trace in them may possibly be owing to their contrast with the *roughs*, who are still brutal and ugly, notwithstanding all the painter has done to harmonise them.

Van Ostade's women have shoulder of mutton fists, which at once destroy all the illusion of the sex. In Bega's pieces the women's hands are somewhat more finely carved, their profiles are less hideous and heavy, and their forms more femininely fashioned, notwithstanding the heavy woollen jackets which disfigure them.

How magical is the power of genius ! It is in vain that the enemies of the Van Ostade school pretend to discover in Bega's pieces the same defects that they attributed to his master. It is in vain that they tax him with the production of repulsive subjects, which they say are the necessary results of taking ugliness for a model. They will never persuade either the amateur or the public that there is nothing in tap-room and tavern scenes which can interest either the imagination or the eye of the spectator. To many of the grosser and ruder disciples of Van Ostade, their remarks may possibly apply, but in the case of Bega they are obviously irrelevant. The *chiaro-oscuro*, and the touch of this master, are the mysterious agencies which redeem the grossness of his subjects. He has managed, moreover, to give so sentimental a colouring to the vulgar expression of his tipplers, that he will continue to be a favourite with connoisseurs as long as there are amongst them any admirers of artistic truth, or, in other words, of that skilful blending of the deceptions of art with the truth of nature, in which Bega was so great a magician. A lady of quality stopping for a moment before Bega's picture of “The Fiddler,” exclaimed, “Would it really be possible to persuade such women that that fanciful, imaginative, susceptible phantom, styled love, could ever haunt these scenes, or lie in the drunken leer of such eyes, or have voice and utterance through gaping mouths that spread from ear to ear. This I will not believe.” “How strange soever that may appear,” replied the picture fancier, “it would be still more strange to suppose that these masterpieces could for more than two centuries have been the admiration of amateurs, and have been reckoned among the art treasures of the principal public and private galleries of Europe, if they did not possess the magnetic attractions of genius.”

## "THE ALE-HOUSE HOP."

There is something that reminds us both of the Flemish Teniers and our English Teniers, Wilkie, in this scene of coarse, but not indecent, rustic gaiety.

Probably Wilkie never saw this picture, and we all know how often the same idea will strike two great minds (kindred minds especially), else this "Ale-house Hop" of Cornelius Bega might well have been supposed to have suggested "The Blind Fiddler" of Wilkie. In neither is there any wish or attempt to refine or poetise the subject. It is a scene of rustic revelry, and the dancers are not Arcadian shepherds or poetic peasants. They are *bond fide* rustics, coarse featured and splay-footed. Music cannot soften, nor joy illumine, nor even love refine these boorish faces and these clownish forms. Yet this "Ale-house Hop" is one of Bega's *chefs-d'œuvre*.

Bega possessed in perfection the rare art of lighting a picture, so as to give the utmost effect to each individual object, and to the *tout-ensemble*. This is nowhere more remarkable than in "The Ale-house Hop." There is a harmony and brilliancy perfectly fascinating in the way in which the light coming in from a loft window, admirably depicted, plays upon the faces coarsely merry, the hardworking hands, exquisitely drawn, the prominent folds of the rude garments, the edges of the pewter pot, and of the broken barrel, and indeed every object whose prominence could catch that soft and borrowed lustre that steals in through the loft window. Bega did not give to his peasants the sensual and almost brutal stupidity we find in those of Teniers and Van Ostade. Bega's boors are coarse, but they are not indecent.

To the right of the picture of "The Ale-house Hop" there is an old peasant embracing an elderly matron of the same rank, but this little episode, which those more popular painters Teniers, Van Ostade, and even Wilkie would have made intolerable to the eye of modest taste, has its *sentiment*, and "John Anderson my Joe," and all that touching outpouring of rustic wedded love, that survived strength, youth, beauty, even time itself, is recalled to the gazer's memory, by the kindly smile of the well-pleased old woman, and the earnest hug of the aged boor.

We fancy she is listening to his fond record of happy dances with her, and of golden days of life's spring-time—

"When they were first acquent."

It is not impossible that this village hop is meant to celebrate a rustic wedding. If so, the *pro tempore* hero, *alias* the bridegroom, is the principal dancer. "Love is blind," and indifferent spectators cannot judge what a man in love may be to the woman by whom he is loved, else a greater antidote to the tender passion it would not be possible to conceive than the principal dancer in "The Ale-house Hop." And yet there is a sort of amorous triumph in his coarse features, and a confidence in the manner in which he clutches his partner's hand, which add to the probability that he has induced her to make him her "lord and master," and that they have indeed just been bound by

"The knot there is no untying."

All the figures are, in their coarse, clownish proportions and rustic garments, admirably drawn and grouped, and the faces are not quite the vacant faces of the mere "animals" Teniers, Brauwer, and Van Ostade often depicted; they have sentiment and expression—in keeping, it is true with their "low estate;" but not brutalised by ignorance and drink out of all intelligence.

Cornelius Bega was, like so many others of that bright band of brothers of the brush that Holland produced so suddenly (without predecessors or successors in their wondrous and peculiar art), a masterly engraver. Indeed, it was truly said of him by a great connoisseur, "that he never painted so well as when he engraved!" Among the most interesting of these engravings, is—"The Nursing Mother and her Husband," an aquafortis which has all the vigour and richness of an oil painting. This interior, which a less masterly and amiable genius would have made the miserable and gloomy abode of poverty and toil, is by the pencil of Bega invested with a charm which yet takes nothing from the truth, the reality, of the scene. Poverty, unmistakable poverty, is there; and hard labour—daily toil for daily bread—is written on the coarse features of the husband and the worn, patient face of the "Nursing Mother." But yet, love, sunshine, and a sucking babe at an overflowing breast, are there; and the

picture is suggestive of happy thoughts. That sunshine with which Bega loved to illumine the homes of the poor—a boon which no wealth can insure, and no poverty exclude—he has poured in, like a flood, at the small unglazed window, through which there is a pretty peep at a neighbour's cot, and at that



THE YOUNG GALLANT. FROM A PAINTING BY JAN STEEN.

graceful parasite, the creeper, festooning even the casement of the poor man's hovel. In that full light "The Nursing Mother" sits, child of the soil herself, and, doubtless, herself a tiller of the earth—a hewer of wood and drawer of water, as the peasant women of Holland still are. The sun does not make her blink: she is used alike to sunshine and rain. She seems to be listening with quiet pleasure to some kind things her husband is saying. He has evidently snatched a few moments from the fields to tell her that he is proud of the boy and of his mother too; and that he doesn't care how hard he works to



maintain them, or how many more there are of them for him to work for ; while she, not less loving, but more prudent, may be reminding him of possible times to come when there will be no sunshine within or without, but winter out of doors, and that winter of life, old age, within. But he is too



THE OLD INVALID. FROM A PAINTING BY JAN STEEN.

glad—too proud of his bouncing boy, so well supplied—to be downcast ; he tells her to keep up a good heart, and reminds her that the righteous are never forsaken, nor do their seed beg their bread.

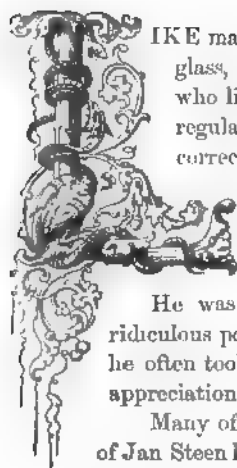
#### HIS MERITS.

Bega was a great master of *chiaro-oscuro*. Most good engravers are. His touch has not the finish and the softness of his great master's, but it is piquant, sharp, and clear. It is a little dry perhaps, and not always as highly wrought as could have been desired, but his distribution of

light and shade has never been surpassed, and he has taken more pains with the execution of his pictures in the nobler style of Mieris and of Metzu, than in those rustic interiors *à la Teniers*, in which boors dance, booze, and make love to women whom one would not suppose capable of inspiring the tender passion in any man—except we bear in mind the old proverb of “Birds of a feather,” &c. &c., “Like seeks like,” or, as we learnt it at school, *Similis simili gaudet*. Bega was, and is quite unrivalled in the power of representing the rustic furniture of peasant homes and country pot-houses.

Old worm-eaten screens, ladders, rough and decayed boards, old benches, and those rickety chairs of humble Batavian homes, which remind one of the ancient fable of Baucis and Philemon. Bega engraved thirty-five master-pieces. His paintings are not so numerous, but they are gems of art, and in very high request. Their paucity does not diminish their value certainly, but they have an intrinsic merit of the highest order. It is true that boors drinking in a pot-house or dancing in a barn are not objects of the highest interest in themselves, but they become so when united with every graceful variety of light and shade, and when the artist suddenly introduces into the dark and rude home of the poor man, the most noble and illustrious of the painter's *dramatis personæ*, the Sun.

## JAN STEEN.



LIKE many of his contemporary artists, Jan Steen was a boon companion, who loved his glass, and made his professional success pander to his pot-house tastes. Houbraken, who lived about the same time, informs us, that he was an habitual drunkard, and a regular buffoon. But those who see below the surface of things have formed a more correct notion of the character of Steen. He was, no doubt, a frequenter of taverns, and he even made of his own dwelling a public drinking house. But although he was fond of good company and good cheer, and lived merrily, when he had the means and was in the mood, he was nevertheless a man of a philosophical mind and a keen observer of character.

He was witty and humorous, and although by nature inclined to see life from a ridiculous point of view, and to lash with laughing sallies the follies and frailties of his race, he often took a higher flight, and in some of his nobler conceptions has shown a correct appreciation of grace and beauty.

Many of Houbraken's biographical sketches are tame and uninteresting; but in the case of Jan Steen he has in some measure redeemed his reputation. We see at once, from the nature of his narrative, that he was intimate with the subject of his memoir, and that although there was a difference of twenty years in their respective ages, he had assisted at many of the scenes he describes, and in which he seems to have sympathised.

According to Houbraken, Steen was born at Leyden, and was the friend and contemporary of Mieris. He was a pupil of John Van Goyen, under whom he made great and rapid progress. His talent for painting, and his agreeable manners endeared him, not only to Van Goyen himself, but to his lovely and susceptible daughter Margaret, who relished his witticisms, and in return gave him her heart. Steen reciprocated her affection with interest, and took such advantage of her preference that Margaret was soon in a condition which should have followed, not preceded marriage. As the crisis approached she consulted with her lover, who soon convinced her that there was nothing for it but to marry at once, and undertook himself to break the matter to their respective parents.

After the labours of the day were over, Steen was in the habit of drinking with Van Goyen at a neighbouring tavern. Taking advantage of a moment when his prospective father-in-law was in excellent humour, our hero, after beating for a while about the bush, remarked in a quiet way, “I have news for you which will rouse you ‘like a rattling peal of thunder.’ Your daughter—I can conceal it no longer—is on the point of presenting you with an heir, and I am not going to shirk my share of the blame. If

you do not think me unworthy of becoming your son-in-law, I shall be but too proud of the alliance, and all will go well." Van Goyen was, as his pupil had supposed, thunder-struck at the intelligence, but he felt the full weight of his pupil's argument, and saw that resistance was useless, and would only increase the difficulties. He therefore accepted Jan Steen's proposal for the hand of his daughter. But the greatest obstacle to the match was the pride of Havick Jan Steen, the father of the expectant bridegroom, who having made his money in his brewery at Delft, did not relish the idea of his son marrying a portionless girl. The lover's importunities, however, at length prevailed over the old man's parsimony, and the brewer not only gave his consent to the marriage, but built a brewery at Delft for the young couple, to whom he gave a portion of 10,000 florins.

Young Steen had not yet learnt the value of money, and with plenty of it in his pocket he took no thought for the morrow. His wife, who was a simple, careless woman, attended neither to economy nor the counter. She kept no books, and to save herself all unnecessary trouble, debited her customers with the price of their beer in a chalk score on the door—a primeval way of keeping accounts, which debtors have so often evaded, that the facility with which "they walk their chalks," has become quite proverbial.

This, of course, could not last. Jan was one day summoned before the burgomaster on a charge of defrauding the revenue, and ordered to produce his books. The door, with its chalk entries by his wife, was all he could show, and as no one could decipher her hieroglyphics—not even Margaret herself, who never thought twice about her scores—poor Steen was fined heavily for his default. As, however, his brewery was on the eve of bankruptcy, he jokingly reminded the exciseman of the old adage, "Sue a beggar," &c. &c.

His affairs indeed were in such a state that he must have "shut up shop" but for the assistance of his father. But the evil was only postponed, not remedied. One morning Margaret informed her merry husband that in the cellar there was neither beer nor malt, and scarcely sufficient barley to make him his gruel. The game was up. With the most perfect unconcern Jan Steen saw for the second time the failure of his brewery. With that "devil-may-care" air which characterised him, he merely observed with a smile, what a capital picture this scene would make, and from the inspiration of the moment he sketched a piece full of life and reality. The room is a complete chaos, the furniture is all upset, the cat is carrying off the bacon, the children are sprawling on the floor, and the mother seated in her arm-chair looks on with her habitual unconcern, while Jan Steen himself is stoically fortifying himself with a glass of wine.

The painting of "The Parrot" is one of the art treasures of the Museum at Amsterdam. The figures in this piece are all handsome and well-dressed. Three gentlemen, with swords at their sides, are playing at backgammon. Their cloaks are hanging on the back of an arm-chair, and a lovely maiden, a type of beauty—

" Curtained from the sight

Of the gross world, illumining one only mansion with its light"—

is dressed in a *negligée* of silk, which, like Nora Creina's gown—

" Floats as wild as mountain breezes,

Leaving every beauty free

To sink or swell, as nature pleases."

We have but the back view of her person, but we catch a glance of the side of her white neck, and can trace her fine profile, as she raises her hand to give some tid-bits to her favourite parrot, whose cage, in the form of a lantern, is suspended to the ceiling; a child is feeding a kitten with some broth; while a regular Dutch vrow is preparing some mince collops on a gridiron for the backgammon-players. The scene is characteristic of the country of the painter, where the same chamber is at once parlour, bed-room, and kitchen, and where even ladies of the higher orders, educated and refined, receive gentlemen visitors in their sleeping apartments.

#### "THE YOUNG GALLANT."

Jan Steen was a merry tippler, who took everything in good part. His mirth, however, was not the gross buffoonery of fools, but that refined pleasantry—intellectual, and perhaps a little cynical—in which the true philosopher delights. He passed his life in studying mankind for his own amusement,

and in illustrating on canvas the result of his studies for the amusement of others. Never was there a jolly companion more communicative. Every picture that he has bequeathed to posterity shows that he had large sympathies. Though he worshipped the bottle, he had a correct appreciation of the virtue of temperance; and, though he was often intoxicated, he ridiculed intoxication in others. He



THE DANCING DOG. FROM A PAINTING BY JAN STEEN.

was, in fact, a chapter of inconsistencies—a toper preaching temperance, glass in hand. There is, indeed, in Beckford's collection, a picture by Steen, entitled "The Effects of Intemperance." The principal characters in the piece are the artist himself and his "winsome wife," in that state of drowsiness which is the result of deep potations. The buxom dame, who also figures in the foreground of the painting of "The Young Gallant," from which our engraving is copied, is dozing in her chair, while

her children are on the watch, to take profit by her drowsiness. A little boy has already filched a coin from his mother's pocket, which he displays as a trophy; another is in the act of breaking a glass, out of sheer mischief; the dog is making free with the dish; the cat is smashing the crockery, in a vain endeavour to seize a bird in a cage; and the monkey is playing with papers of importance. On



THE PARROT. FROM A PAINTING BY JAN STEEN.

the ground lie, in chaotic disorder, silver dishes, broken glasses, a fiddle, a china plate; and, to complete the scene of confusion, the goose on the spit is burning to a cinder. When Steen painted this disgraceful scene, he condemned his own course of life. But habit is second nature; and it is easier to confess than to reform.

The painting of "The Young Gallant" is a spirited and truthful representation of a Dutch interior. The lapse of two centuries has made as little change in the habits of the people as it has in their appearance. The two women are types of a class, and might pass for many a Dutch *vrouw* we have ourselves seen in our travels.

#### "THE DANCING DOG."

Steen had many of the characteristics of Miéris and of Metz, but although he surpassed these two celebrated masters in the liveliness and humour of his subjects, he has seldom equalled them in "finish." "The Dancing Dog" is an elaborate piece in which he has displayed all his energies. The numerous figures he has introduced are all types of a class, and have a humorous individuality. The dog is one of that intelligent poodle breed, with his hinder quarters and fore paws shaven, so common in France and Holland. During the canine exhibition, which apparently engrosses the attention of the party, some amorous bye-play is going on between the buxom *vrouw* and her fascinated, but not too fascinating admirer. Indeed, what Lamartine terms the "eternal drama of life" is the amusement of most of the occupiers of the scene, whom the painter has skilfully divided into pairs. Each in his own sphere plays his proper part in this and every other picture by Jan Steen.

With him costume, carriage, physiognomy, and manner are all in keeping. His doctors are swelling with conscious self-importance; they are clothed in professional black, and are serious and silent as mutes. The dentist adds to the conical hat of the doctor the cock's feather, and has the lines in his forehead more deeply marked. The mirth of the country clown is distinguishable from that of the city apprentice. The attentions of the accepted suitor are not quite so devoted as those of the youthful lover. The lawyer has a six-and-eightpenny look about him that no one can mistake; and the tippler at the ale-house has a tipsy identity that we can recognise in most of Jan Steen's productions.

He had by his wife Margaret van Goyen, whom he survived, six children. But thinking, apparently, that his progeny was not sufficiently numerous for their prospects, he took for his second wife a widow of the name of Mariette Herkulens, who had two children of her own. Every member of this large family was made of use in his profession as a model. He loved to paint them all in a domestic muddle, and to give to each the characteristic of his age—from the babe who was playing with a rattle or torturing a kitten, to the youth who was already assuming the airs of a man. He has also reproduced his aged parents in all the pictures in which he has represented old age. He had, therefore, in his own family, models for every phase of human existence. Even the animals about him have all been immortalised on his canvas as types of their kind. In one of his masterpieces, which is now in the museum at La Haye, he has painted himself between his two wives. It is a fanciful conceit, but we pardon the anachronism on account of the pleasing contrast between the two *vrouws*, who both possessed considerable personal attractions.

His second marriage was a great mistake, for his means were altogether insufficient for the increased expenses of his establishment.

He died in 1689, aged 53, in great poverty. He left nine children; but with the exception of Thierry, a successful sculptor, we know nothing of their history.

#### "THE PARROT."

We have already analysed the merits of this piece, but we cannot quit the subject without observing how well this admirable composition verifies the truth of the criticism of a celebrated connoisseur, who says that Jan Steen, when he gives full play to his humorous imagination, can always be recognised by the gaiety of his conception. There is scarcely a single picture from his pencil which is not redolent of mirth and good humour. In his interpretation of popular proverbs he relieves the trite and commonplace nature of the subject by the quaint expression of his faces and the ridiculous attitudes of his figures. He detested doctors, and has satirized the members of the faculty as severely as some of our modern wits and dramatists have the limbs of the law. Their ignorance and affectation excited the wrath and ridicule of Molière, who, in his *Médecin Malgré Lui*, has lashed them as unsparingly as Steen in "A Doctor feeling a Maiden's Pulse." In this piece, the son of *Æsculapius*, with nothing of the physiologist about him but the black gown and conically shaped hat in which we have seen Regnier, at St. James's, enact the part of *le Docteur Pancras*, is counting with

all the feigned wisdom of folly and all the assumption of ignorance the pulsations of the girl's wrist. But the chambermaid has fathomed the secret of an indisposition which would have baffled the skill of a wiser man than our doctor. Her knowing wink and the little bust of "Cupid the Conqueror," to which she is directing attention, solve the mystery. This masterpiece is in the Museum at La Haye, and the "Sick young Wife and the Doctor," a piece of a similar character, is in the "Hermitage," at St. Petersburg.

"GRACE BEFORE MEAT."

Steen and Metzu were kindred spirits. Both natives of Leyden, they seem to have imbibed with the air of their common birthplace a similar taste and style. In many of their respective productions we trace this resemblance, and perhaps in none more than in the picture of the "Grace before Meat," from which our engraving is copied. It is rather strange that Houbraken, who has recorded so many of the sayings and doings of Steen, is silent on the subject of his intimacy with Metzu. We cannot account for this omission on the part of Steen's biographer, but upon the supposition that Metzu, who was a painter of refined and fashionable life, seldom, if ever, frequented his jovial *confrère's* cabaret. In all probability the intercourse of the two friends was on neutral ground, where Steen, without offending the aristocratic prejudices of Metzu, could yet enjoy his pipe and his glass. No artist ever possessed greater powers of conversation, and in discussing matters of art he seems to have had an intuitive perception of all the rules that others only acquire by long study and instruction. His conversational powers were no doubt the chief attraction to Metzu, whose habits and mode of life were quite opposed to those of Steen. It is however certain that they were on terms, not merely of acquaintanceship, but of friendship and intimacy, and that Steen painted the portraits both of Metzu and his wife.

In the "Grace before Meat" the expression of the little girl who is repeating, at the dictation of her mother, the formula of "sound words," is very natural. She is the same child who figures in the "Saint Nicholas," a painting in which Steen commemorates the customary observance in Holland of that juvenile festival. St. Nicholas is the patron saint of children, and on his *fête* parents, even to this day, fill the shoes of their little ones with various kinds of toys and sweetmeats, which the simpletons are taught to believe are a present from St. Nicholas, who has come down the chimney for this purpose during the night. There are several pieces by our artist on this same subject. He had himself a large family of children, and was, according to the custom of the country, often compelled to keep the festival of their patron saint. In one of these *tableaux* we see the old grandmother from a back window playing the part of his sugarplum saintship, and throwing all manner of nice things into the chimney, while the children are rushing eagerly to clutch the cakes with which the *sweet saint* is supplying them. They are struggling, squeezing, elbowing each other, and wrangling, upsetting chairs and tables, and often losing their footing in their eagerness and hurry. The little girl to whom we have alluded is holding forth her apron, while her eye is beaming with hope and faith. A boy, the same sturdy model we see in "Grace before Meat," is imploring the bounty of the saint. Even the old nurse seems to claim her share, and the maid, urging on, both by word and gesture, the candidates for cakes and sugarplums, seems to say, "Now you see what it is to be good children." In this picture the high praise of M. de Burtin, who says that "not only can we discern the thoughts, but we can even guess the words of Jan Steen's speaking figures," seems not undeserved. The most dramatic person of the whole of this conception is a boy about nine years of age, who, with his back against the chimney, is smiling with an air of conscious superiority at the simplicity of his brothers and sisters. The play of faces is most admirable, and we know of no artist of the French school who has approached Jan Steen in this style, with the exception of Chardin, who has painted a "Grace before Meat" also admirable in its way.

Houbraken says that he had long in his possession a picture by Steen, which was afterwards purchased by the Duke of Wolfenbützel. The subject of this piece is the signing of a marriage settlement. The attitude and action of all the figures introduced are so natural and expressive, that, as we study the picture, we could almost imagine that we were actors in the scene. The two fathers-in-law, entirely engrossed with the financial arrangements, are urging certain conditions on the lawyer, who, pen in hand, is listening with a serious and attentive air. The bridegroom, enraged at the delay, dashes his hat upon the ground, shrugs his shoulders, and gazing upon his bride with uplifted hands, seems to say,



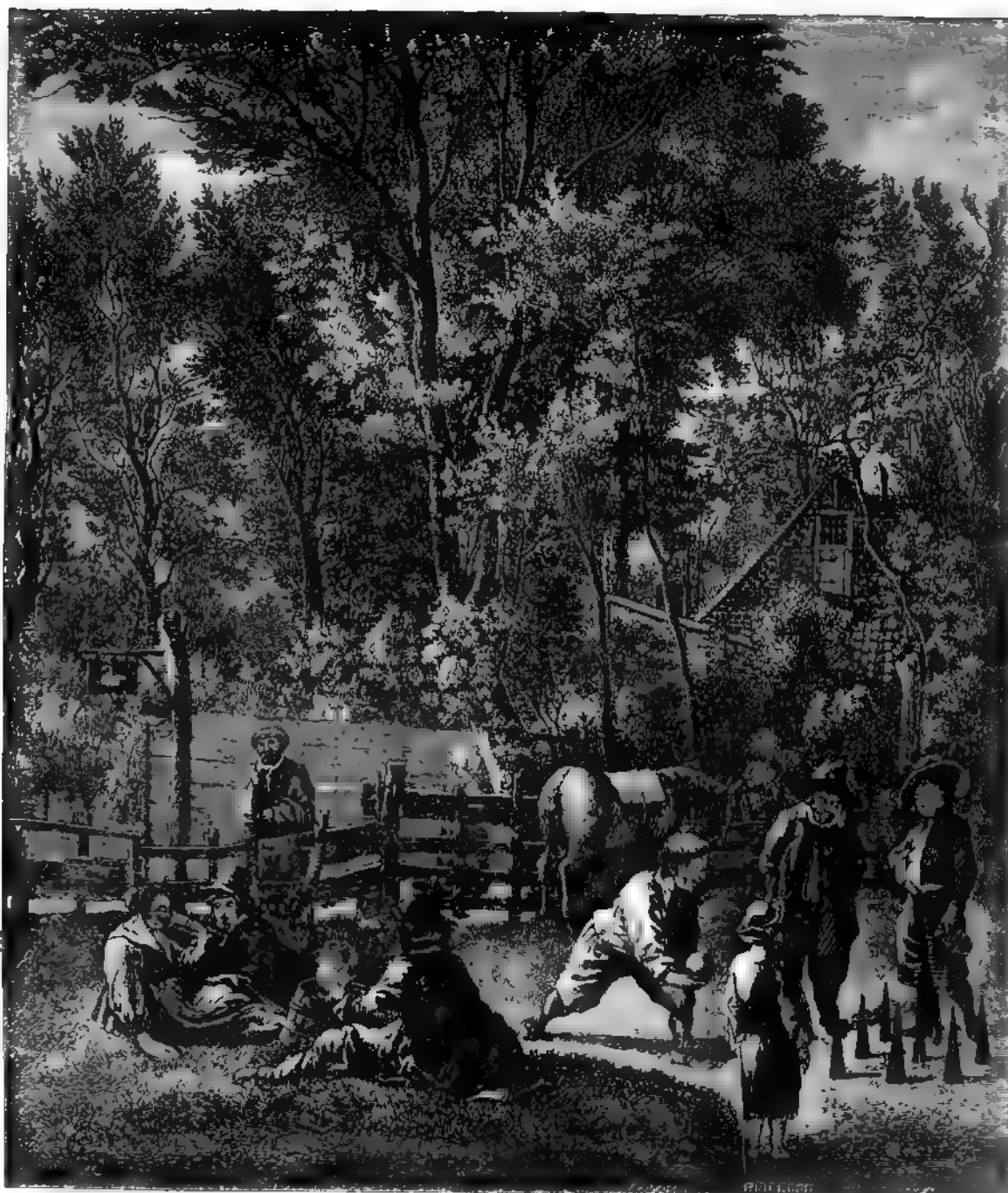
GRACE BEFORE MEAT. FROM A PAINTING BY JAN STEEN.

"I have nothing to do with all these mercenary calculations." The bride is evidently much affected by this disinterested proof of attachment, and rewards her suitor with a look of unutterable love. In point of expression, says Houbraken, this tableau is Steen's masterpiece.

#### "THE GAME OF NINEPINS."

The picture from which our engraving is copied was in the collection of Randon de Boisset, and fetched, at the sale of his effects, in 1777, 1,600 francs, or £64. The piece is very much in the style





THE GAME OF NINEPINS. FROM A PAINTING BY JAN STEEN.

of some of Wilkie's village scenes. The great popularity of Jan Steen in our own country is possibly owing to the domestic character of his compositions. One of the greatest detractors of the Dutch *répertoire*—Paillot de Montabert, a man who declares that the productions of the greater number of Jan Steen's fellow-countrymen and contemporaries are enigmas to him—does justice to the genius of our artist.

"In Jan Steen alone," says this connoisseur, "there is no uncertainty. His figures have a decided character. He has carried to the highest pitch of perfection the distinctive traits, the tone, and the exactitude of character. But, alas! how few Jan Steens there are in this school." It is this enviable faculty of giving to each separate figure a marked individuality, which makes "The Game of Nine-pins" so great a favourite with connoisseurs. The position, the expression, and the *tout ensemble* of the player is true to nature. The listless appearance of the whole company is faithfully described; and we have no doubt that the sign of "The Swan" has witnessed, in both countries, successive generations of similar idlers through a long summer's day, in the course of more than two centuries. So true a history of passing events is this piece, that it might stand for a scene outside "The Swan" in the year of grace 1858. And so it is with all genuine painters and poets. They are not for an age, but for all time.

Campo Weyerman, a humorous writer, who, in seasoning his narrative to the tastes of his readers, often indulges in mere tattle, relates this characteristic anecdote: "The following particulars," says he, "will show that Jan Steen's cellar and safe were not as well supplied as those of 'The Golden Lion,' one of the hotels on the Quay at La Haye. One evening, towards midnight, the illustrious Lievens (the friend and follower of Rembrandt) knocked at Steen's door, which, as usual, was only on the latch. He therefore entered without waiting for an invitation. 'Who's there?' said Jan Steen, starting up in a fright. 'It is I,' said Lievens; 'and I bring with me a couple of chickens, as fat and well-liking as the best Brunswick beer. They are as white as an egg-shell, and as tender as the legs of a pheasant.' 'Are they roasted?' asked Steen. 'Not yet, my noble sir,' replied Lievens; 'but I am myself no contemptible cook. If, therefore, you will get up and dress, I will prepare you a dish in my own way.'

"Steen was soon dressed; and, summoning his son Cornelius, who was the waiter at his father's tavern, he gave directions for the occasion. But many things were wanting in the painter's domestic arrangements to render the repast complete. Steen had neither wine nor tobacco; and, in spite of all his objections, Cornelius was despatched to a wine merchant, of the name of Gorkens, to beg a few bottles of wine, on the security of some forthcoming pictures. 'When you have fetched the wine,' said the father, 'you must go to the tobacconist's, and beg for a ha'porth of leaf tobacco and a couple of pipes, upon the assurance of my eternal gratitude.' While Cornelius was ransacking the town for wine and tobacco, Lievens was hard at work in the kitchen. The fowls were soon plucked, and on the gridiron. While they were doing, Steen had manufactured, with pepper, mustard, vinegar, and butter, an excellent sauce, by way of seasoning. The moment the fowls were done, the famishing *confrères* set to; and before Cornelius—out of breath with anxiety to come in for his share of the victuals—had returned with the wine and tobacco, there was nothing left but a head and a half, with two black claws. They soon disposed of the liquids, and then Steen and his friend walked out on the ramparts, and puffed away with their pipes. Like true peripatetics, they moralised as they went on all sublunary things."

But the indifference with which he left everything to chance, cost Steen for once rather dear. Unluckily, on his return from his walk, he left the door again on the latch, and, during the deep sleep which followed the unusual abundance of his repast, some rogues managed to enter unheard, and to carry off not only his own and his children's clothes, but also the canvas and frames which he was painting for his creditors. When he awoke the next morning, he was much amazed at the silence of the house, and, in an angry tone, asked why his son had made no fire. "Because," said he, "I am, like Adam, in my nakedness, and cannot find my clothes." Whereupon his father felt all about for his own unmentionables. But the whole wardrobe had disappeared; and he was obliged to send his undressed little ones to borrow a few rags from an eating-house hard by, until he could make known his misfortune to his nephew Rynburg, who kindly gave them each and all a new outfit, in which they came forth like those fabulous birds of the sun, which Pliny denominates "Phoenix."

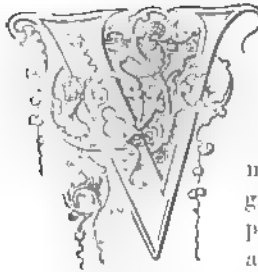
But the best joke of all was what happened, as a consequence of this theft, to a certain medical practitioner, who was a customer of Steen's, and sometimes sat to him as a model. The brother of the leech was a reputed thief; and the doctor himself, though as rich as a Cæsar, would have felt no qualms of conscience at pilfering from the painter. Steen suspected this man; and when he called the next day, to condole with the artist on the loss of his clothes and his canvas, our hero's

greeting was anything but complimentary. "Set of thieves!" said he. "Pilferers—Pirates! You are but come to see if you can dispose of the shell after having eaten the yolk of the egg." The son of Esculapius, who was unprepared for so warm a welcome, thought discretion the better part of valour, and immediately took to his heels. Though innocent of the theft, he left Jan Steen persuaded that the crime had been committed by the very man who came to sympathise with him.

#### HIS MERITS.

Jan Steen has been styled, by no less an authority than Sir Joshua Reynolds, a master of the highest eminence. His immortal renown (for immortal that may already be styled which has survived the criticisms of centuries) is owing to the wit, the humour, the expression, and liveliness which characterise all his productions. Spectators never tire of contemplating what is in itself pleasing, and for this reason Jan Steen will be a favourite with amateurs and the public long after those who have staked their fame on the colours of a carpet, the glossy finish of a silk robe, or the fineness of their touch and tone are forgotten.

### ARENT, OR ARNOULD, VAN DER NEER.



AN DER NEER, who may well be styled painter in ordinary to the Queen of Night, so entirely did he devote his time and talents to the service of the "lady moon," received no justice at all at the hands of the biographers of his own day; and even Descamps, who wrote at a time when Van Der Neer's pictures were justly celebrated, only devoted a few lines to his merits, introducing this brief tribute to the son in the very concise account he gives of Eglon Van der Neer, his father, as if so admirable and singular a painter as Arent Van der Neer were not worthy of being made the subject of an entire memoir.

The details of his life are little known; doubt and obscurity encircle even his name. Some call him "Art," some "Arthur," some "Arnould," but the learned M. de Burtin styles him "Arent Van der Neer," and M. de Burtin is seldom wrong. Van der Neer was celebrated for his winter pieces and his fire-sides; but he was as much the painter of Night as our own immortal Dr. Young was the poet of the star-crowned Queen. In the exquisite subject now before us, called

#### "MOONLIGHT,"

We have a scene which owes almost all its beauty, and certainly all its dignity, to the masterly introduction of that fair sovereign who gives in her Queen-like bounty a silver token to every leaf of the grove and every ripple of the stream. It is a common Dutch scene, that would have had little charm by day; but the ivory lights and ebon shadows, the tranquillity of the earth, and the commotion that seems to be going on in the sky, give it a weird and mysterious beauty by night. The figures that are flitting about seem to have no business there. We wonder why they are not fast asleep in that quiet old farm house, we associate their dark forms with darker deeds; we dream of midnight murder, foul conspiracy, or coward robbers,—and we watch them with interest, though perhaps they are only farm labourers stealing home from the pot-house, or the *gudeman* and his son in wait to prevent the meeting of the daughter of the house with her lover.

The foreground is bold, and throws out the middle distance and the delicate *lointain*. The trees have a depth and mass peculiar to night, and the water is as clear as glass in which the moon,

"Like a bride full of blushes, just lingers to take  
A last look in the mirror at night ere she goes."

The life of this lonely and unknown artist was spent in the rapt contemplation of landscape;



JAN STEEN. FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF.

bathed in moonlight. He loved to watch the "sun of the sleepless" peering above a wooded hill, or mirrored in a pond skirted by the huts of the peasantry.

No one has approached Van der Neer in depicting that delicately tinted and entrancing hour

"When twilight melts beneath the moon away."



To so close an observer the heavens at that crisis unfold a succession of soft changes, very monotonous to those who view these things cursorily, but, to the ardent lover of art and nature, full of an infinite variety of lights and shadows, and of effects soft or brilliant, and often both.

"Moonlights" are easily *improvised* by ordinary painters, by means of a few black and white strokes on dark blue paper, or by some dashes of white paint (learnt by heart) and adroitly touched in on an azure ground, with fragments of architecture here and there, and softly rippled waters reflecting the silver lamp of heaven. Those who have been concerned in these rapid manufactures of "Moonlights" will scarcely be able to conceive that Van der Neer discerned in the course of the night and its succession of hours, almost as great a variety of tints and tones, lights and shadows, as Joseph Vernet discovered in the day itself. In short, Van der Neer



C. VAN DER NEER.



so closely studied, copied, and reproduced the different phases of the night, that with a little consideration we can recognise them all.

It is this singular power—the result of the closest study of night—that makes Van der Neer a painter in his own peculiar style quite unrivalled.

One of the great secrets of these magical effects of light and shade (which result from the close study of night as she is) consists in the mystery which, if so enchanting to the human mind in poetry, is not less so in painting. We have all felt the spiritualising effect of moonlight, even on the most commonplace scene. A landscape with scarcely a charm or a shade of interest by day, is wrapped at night in fantastic tints; borrows vastness and grandeur from the manner in which the shadows deepen and spread, and is hallowed by

that soft, pure silver light which, never called upon to illumine the more vulgar and sordid occupations of humanity, makes the earth appear more vast, lone, and still, and the waters more pure, tranquil, and mystic ; and if, when all seems to be sleeping so quietly around, while the moon

“ Tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops,”

a faint light appears at some cottage lattice, if, among the dark and distant groves that loom in the distance, one sees, or fancies one sees, a rider urging his horse to a gallop, what emotions we experience—what speculations occupy our minds ! There at once is a picture to awaken curiosity, arrest thought, and keep us spell-bound. We want to know *why*, at that unwonted hour, that light appears at that cottage window. The sons of the soil, who have worked hard all day, are not given to night-watching. Where is that rider going ? Why does he seek those dark and distant woods ? Perhaps some tragedy is about to be enacted there ! Our fancy will follow this unknown, and, to us, mysterious rider.

By day such an apparition would scarcely have awakened attention, still less conjecture ; but now imagination is busy, for a veil of mystery shrouds all the scenic representations of night. Again, everything looks so much larger by moonlight—so vast, so sublime. Poetry takes the place of prose ; and, however still and quiet the earth may be, the clouds that sail over the sky are reproduced on the ripple of the river or the waves of the ocean. And what majestic, sublime, and weird actors in the great drama of night are those same clouds. Now the moon comes forth, surrounded by a cortège of light, fleecy cloudlets, who “ turn out their silver lining to the earth.” Now she leaves her court far behind her, and, like a mourning queen, roams alone through the azure space. Sometimes it is

“ Night on the waves, and the moon is on high,  
Hung like a gem on the brow of the sky,”

and sometimes, when she has, indeed, supped with the ocean, she looks forth with a red and jolly face, and the stars crowd round her, and the chorus of all these winking beings seems to be—

“ We'll not go home till morning,  
Till daylight does appear.”

Arnould Van der Neer had little help from the scenery which surrounded him. Had his lot been cast in more romantic spots, his facilities for extracting poetry from moonlight effects would have been much greater, but his triumph much less. What would he not have made of moonlights like his on the banks of the Rhine ?—that country of strong contrasts—of Nature's fortresses, crags, and cliffs, that can never perish, surmounted by man's fortresses, towers, and castles, that are crumbling to dust. How sublime would such scenes have been, invested with the majesty of night and the genius of Van der Neer. But in Holland, in the neighbourhood of Amsterdam, Van der Neer beheld nothing but level plains, great expanses of shallow water, dotted with hovels, pollard-willows, and a lowering sky ; and yet to such landscapes Van der Neer, by the aid of genius and moonlight, lent an interest of the highest and most poetical nature ;—tufts of trees, thatched roofs, and flat marshes became, in his hands, lighted by his moons, pictures full of sentiment and mysterious charms.

The Dutch recognise all the spots he has immortalised. They are almost all situated between Amsterdam and Utrecht. In proportion as we quit the sea-shore and approach Utrecht, we find the landscape improve in beauty and fertility. The canals are bordered by gardens, which form a perfect screen of verdure and many-tinted blossoms ; vegetation becomes richer, and of more brilliant hues ; the trees throw out more vigorous and umbrageous branches of a richer and stronger foliage ; the meadows rejoice in an emerald verdure ; and the trellis-work of the avenues (so formal to the eye when bare) is lost in the tapestry of foliage that drapes them.

But although to the gaze of the traveller Nature looks fairer and more smiling, to the eye of the painter she still only offers a perspective, lifeless and without sublimity ; and it required all the creative and thoughtful genius of Van der Neer to immortalise scenes and objects in which the beauty of the natural model falls so far short of the artistic reproduction.

One of the greatest of these *chefs-d'œuvre* is that called the “ Van der Neer of Zumputz.” This is the German name of a family called *Van de Putte*, long naturalised at Cologne, and to whom this

picture belonged. It became part of the collection of M. de Burtin, who has given us the following valuable description of it—we say valuable, because it conveys so just a notion of the merits of all Van der Neer's paintings. After a description of the village of Bambrugge, traversed by the river Vecht, whose limpid waters, he says, are skirted by houses interspersed with trees as far as Nieuwersluis, whence the middle distance is lost in a vast horizon, he goes on to jot down all the accessories of a regular Dutch landscape. But what applies not merely to this picture individually, but to all Van der Neer's masterpieces, is the remark that the closing shades of night have nothing black, cold, or dreary; on the contrary, everything—even the sky itself—is glowing, clear, transparent, soft, harmonious, and feathery. The water reflects every object like a clear and even flattering mirror; and the moonlight, which brings out in soft relief everything to the right of the river, forms a charming contrast to the neutral tints that envelop the left of the scene.

This description, all who study Van der Neer closely will find applicable to many of his masterpieces. He has a sort of mannerism, and that monotony which mannerism always engenders; but to the close observer, the scenes similar in their general character and outline are distinguished by a brilliant variety of tints, and a masterly contrast of the powerful and mysterious effects of *chiaro-oscuro*, and light and shade. Van der Neer has varied his effects while copying from the same model. Minor artists have varied their models, and yet reproduced their effects *ad infinitum*. The face and form of Nature are like those of human beings. True genius represents her like a woman who has a woman's passions, her radiant delights, her bitter griefs, her moments of calm, her hours of trouble and storm: sometimes laughing and full of life, alternately tempestuous and serene, she pleases those who really love her by the very mobility of her mind, the changeableness of a nature constant only in inconstancy. Of course we speak not of inconstancy in affection—love can never really pardon that, but the April charm of inconstancy of mood, which the poet describes when he says—

“That loveliness even in motion that plays  
Like the light upon Autumn's soft shadowy days,  
Now here and now there, giving warmth as it flies  
From the lip to the cheek, from the cheek to the eyes;  
If pensive, it seemed as if that very grace,  
That charn of all others, were born in her face;  
And when angry—for e'en in the tranquildest climes,  
Slight breezes will ruffle the flowers sometimes—  
That short passing anger but seem'd to awaken  
New fragrance, like flowers that are sweetest when shaken;  
While her laugh—oh, her laugh! without any control  
But the sweet one of gracefulness, rang from her soul;  
And where it most sparkled no glance could discover—  
In lip, cheek, or eye—for she brightened all over.”

What the poet sung of beauty in woman, Van der Neer and kindred geniuses have realised of Nature in their works of art.

#### “THE SKATERS.”

This is a picture which seems to have served as a model to all painters who have, since Van der Neer's time, represented this healthful and delightful exercise, for which the shallow waters and hard frosts of Holland offer so many facilities. Never was *chiaro-oscuro* more exquisitely treated than in this wintry scene: the frozen sky and ice-bound shore, the leafless trees, and the frost-bitten grass, all are eloquent of winter. And so little is Holland altered, that this scene, produced two hundred years ago, will be reacted in *Anno Domini* 1857, if a hard frost sets in, and enables the hardy women of the Low Countries to skate to market with their baskets on their heads. Holland is not the country of change and progress. The mills Van der Neer has so admirably depicted here have their representatives still, and we fancy we have looked out of the windows of that old inn on just such skaters sliding over such ice, and just such boats wedged into the frozen waters.

There are but few authentic records of the life of this great painter. Like Ruysdael, he courted silence and solitude, and was never so happy as in the undisturbed enjoyment of his own reflections.

He loved to contemplate nature in her melancholy mood, and preferred the soft and silver light of the moon to the garish and gaudy splendour of the meridian sun. He has bequeathed to posterity some beautiful and suggestive illustrations of morning and evening.



MOONLIGHT SCENE. FROM A PAINTING BY VAN DER NEER.

"MORNING."

There is a certain degree of sameness in nearly all Van der Neer's productions. The similarity we remark in them is owing in a great measure to their constituent elements. He always introduces patches of still water slightly wrinkled here and there by a breath of air. There is almost in every case a sail in the distance, and in the foreground are the trees, the figures, and the scattered buildings of the



hamlet, which give so domestic and homely a character to his "Morning." The *claro-oscuro* of this piece is beautifully transparent. The figures in the middle distance shine in the light of the rising orb,

THE PEATERS. FROM A PAINTING BY VAN DER NEER.



and the cattle, partly in sunshine and partly in shade, have just yielded their milky supplies to the exacting demands of their rapacious owners—

"The night is passed, and abides the sun,  
As though that morn were a jocund one.  
Lightly and brightly breaks away  
The morning from its mantle gray;  
And the noon will look on a sultry day."

Part of the landscape is still enveloped in shade, and cannot as yet participate in the brightness that beams from the distant horizon. The rays which issue from the rising disc have as yet but little power, and can only with difficulty force their golden way through the thick foliage of the trees. Now they are glinted back from the diamond fashioned pane of the cottage window, and now they break in a thousand sparkling scintillations from the surface of the wave which a breath of air has just ruffled. Well did Van der Neer appreciate that indescribable phase of difference which separates the fresh and silvery tints of morning from the golden glory of the setting sun. No other painter in this style, not even our own Richard Wilson, has succeeded so well in drawing the line of demarcation.

#### "EVENING."

This scene is suggestive of the well-earned peace and repose which follow a day of toil. The very windmill is at rest. The gentle breeze is only sufficient to "bathe the brow with airy balm" of the tired villagers, and to wave the foliage of the fine old trees that embower the picturesque cottages. And may not the evening of life be calm and lovely as the close of a beautiful day, or as a rich sunset in a fair landscape?—

"O'er the waste of a life long deserted and wild,  
It comes like a soft golden calm o'er the sea."

Van der Neer's masterpiece is an illustration of the happiness "that purely and glowingly smiles on our evening's horizon." Moore is inconsistent when he exclaims—

"Give me back, give me back, the wild freshness of morning,  
Its tears and its mists are worth evening's best light."

The evening has a cooling freshness as well as the morning, and then it has more of the *otium cum dignitate*. How soon the morning changes into the burning noon. How soon follow the dazzling light and the enervating heat.

"Why should we mourn the brilliancy of day,  
Or sigh for youth intemperately gay?  
Youth, viewing right and wrong in reckless mood,  
Pursuing pleasure as its only good,  
Despising all who caution or reprove,—  
All sober thought and judgment far above!"

"Yes, truly; heedless and too often heartless are the days of early manhood; and when otherwise, they are not days to be regretted. There is more of pain than pleasure in the burden and heat of the day." The suffering is most keen when the feeling is most acute. L. E. L. felt this in describing

"Love that like a fever burns,  
Struggle, spurning what it earns,  
Lone and wasted heart."

Who can deny that the heart is often lone in the noon of life? that it is often wasted, parched, like a tropical landscape under the sun's vertical rays?

Poets as well as painters love the evening; and Byron, apostrophising the evening star, exclaims,—

"Oh Hesperus! thou bringest all good things."

Certain it is that the beauties of evening bring good things to the lovers of painting, since they inspire, and have inspired, our painters to produce those art treasures that enrich the best European collections.

Arnould Van der Neer studied nature by night and by day. His moonlights rival his setting suns. In the latter the melancholy with which he was so thoroughly imbued is reproduced. A spirit such as prompted Milton's "Penseroso" pervades the whole landscape of his "Evening." The song of the nightingale, the lover's serenade, or the curfew bell, would be in harmony with this scene, but the merry strain or the loud laugh would grate upon the ear. Startle not the painter or the poet.

Beware how you dispel the visions of the one or scatter the thoughts of the other. In beautiful harmony with the scenes Arnould Van der Neer so loved to describe, are the following words :—

“ 'Tis evening—On Abruzzo's Hill  
 The summer sun is lingering still,  
 As though unwilling to bereave  
     The landscape of its softest beam ;  
 So sweet, we can but look and grieve  
     To think that, like a passing dream,  
 A few brief fleeting moments more  
 Must see its reign of beauty o'er.  
  
 Though with the passionate sense thus shrined,  
     And canonised the hues of grief,  
 Perchance be closely, darkly twined,  
     The lonely bosom spurns relief ;  
 And could the breathing scene impart  
     A charm to make its sadness less,  
 'Twould curse the balm that eased the smart,  
 And hate the spell of loveliness, if so  
 It stirred the stream of thought below.”

We have alluded to the difficulty of procuring details of the life of Arnould Van der Neer. His peculiar tastes as an artist kept him far from the noisy world, and it is his doings not his sayings, that have made him immortal.

The love of retirement once acquired, a morbid dislike to the world ensues ; but, in the case of men of genius, we must not confound this feeling with *mauvaise honte* or cowardice. Intellectual power gives great intrepidity, and history is full of illustrations of this fact. Behold Diogenes trampling on the pride of Alexander, and Euclid proclaiming in the very ear of majesty, that there is no royal road to science. In later times, we find Fénélon boldly teaching monarchs their duty, as well as the fearless Voltaire, the familiar friend of Frederick the Great. Nor are painters in any degree less conscious of their innate importance than men of letters. There is a case in point in the life of the celebrated Lebas, equally famous as a painter and engraver. A grandee had lent this artist a picture to engrave. When Lebas had completed his work, he asked permission to dedicate it to the obliging aristocrat. The latter gave his gracious leave, with the proviso that it should cost him nothing. Lebas replied that he would make his lordship a present of the right of calling himself the protector of artists.

Having given this instance of Lebas's independent spirit, it would be unjust not to add that he was as amiable with his equals, as he was dignified with those who considered themselves his superiors ; but none of his noble qualities preserved him from bitter enmity. He was even refused admission at the Academy, but not without angry protestations from the minority of members ; one of whom went so far as to say that not one of the judges could draw better than Lebas. It is a curious fact that Lebas did not become a member of the Academy till thirteen years after his first rejection. The work that at length gained him his admission, was an engraving of that pretty picture by Lancret, “The Lovers' Interview.” This print is remarkable for freshness and transparency. It seems executed without effort. It is like a mirror of happiness. Having mentioned Lebas, we cannot dismiss him without recording a singular habit he had contracted, against his own better judgment. It was that of allowing the different parts of one piece to be executed by different artists. Thus, one took the head, another the drapery, a third the landscape. Nevertheless, as a master, Lebas endeavoured to familiarise his pupils with every part of an engraving.

The division of labour in one picture was the fashion in the seventeenth century, viz., that of Arnould Van der Neer, of whose landscapes Albert Cuyp frequently drew the figures. Thus Lebas was not the introducer of a heterogeneous system. But it is a pity he should have given it any encouragement, for so great was his fame that the very mention of his name might serve as a precedent. The celebrated prints, “The Morning Toilet,” “The Good Education,” “The Drawing Lesson,” and “Economy,” are by him ; and in spite of the incessant industry requisite for the production of such masterpieces, he seems always to have found time for cultivating friendship. The following little anecdote shows the easy terms on which he lived with his fellow artists. One day he went to pay a

visit to his friend, the great Chardin. He found him in his studio, with a dead hare, of which he had just drawn a picture.

"I should like to have that," said Lebas, "but I have no money."

"We can settle about that," answered Chardin. "You have on a waistcoat that I like very much."



MORNING. FROM A PAINTING BY VAN DER NEER.

"Oh, take the waistcoat," exclaimed Lebas, and he immediately took off his waistcoat, resumed his outer garment, and walked off with the picture of the hare.

Various other details could be given of the life of this great artist, but their very number leads us to consider how little in comparison is known of that still greater genius, Arnould Van der Neer. One report, however, has reached us, viz., that Albert Cuyp was his master. Van der Neer may have



EVENING. FROM A PAINTING BY VAN DER NEER.

been the pupil of this celebrated painter, but certainly he was not his imitator. The effect produced by the pictures of Van der Neer result from the artist's profound impression of all that is grand, soothing, and solemn in nature.

#### "RIVER SCENE."

There is a great and very pleasing variety in the pieces of Van der Neer. His landscapes are generally views of places in the neighbourhood of Amsterdam, and consist, like this river scene, of villages situated on the margin of the Meuse, upon whose surface are fishermen's boats, barges, and various figures of men and women. His skies are the portions of his picture upon which he has bestowed the greatest care. The *chiaro-oscuro* of this river scene is exceedingly beautiful, and evinces great taste and judgment. His colouring is true to nature, and his touch is easy and ready. "In all his pieces," says Immerzell, "there is a harmony of tone which fascinates the spectator." At one time



his productions were very common in Holland, so common indeed that their number lowered their value in the eyes of the artist's countrymen. Foreigners, profiting by the glut, bought them up at a low figure, and there are now so few of them where they were so plenty, that they fetch quite fabulous prices when at any public auction any of them are offered for sale. A winter scene which had formed part of the collection of M. Vranken van Lockeren, was sold in 1825 for three thousand francs, and another *chef-d'œuvre* by the same master, entitled "Landscape, with Figures and Cattle," at a public sale in this metropolis was knocked down to an eager purchaser for eight hundred pounds. So capricious is the public taste, and so different at different times and in different countries is the value set upon the paintings of great masters. At one time a moonlight scene by Van der Neer fetches something less than three pounds, and at another a landscape is eagerly bought for eight hundred pounds!

"THE RISING MOON."

In this view, representing the rising moon, the disposition of objects is somewhat similar to that observed in "Evening," but the scene is entirely different. We can fancy that Arnould Van der Neer, dreamy, enthusiastic lover of nature as he was, after taking his sketch of "Evening," was still unwilling to return to the abodes of men—that he wandered on alone on the bank of the river, till the Queen of Night rose in her calm majesty, and that the painter was rapt in silent admiration of her beauty. Van der Neer could not allow this effect to pass unrecorded. He evidently felt the influence of those pale beams which the poet has so exquisitely described, when he says—

"The silver light which, hallowing tree and tower,  
Sheds beauty and deep softness o'er the whole,  
Breathes to the heart, and gently o'er it throws  
A loving languor which is not repose."

Often in his lonely midnight wanderings must he have invoked this Cynthia, not of a "minute" but a life, in the spirit, though not in the words, of Milton, in "Comus :"—

"And thou, fair moon,  
That wot to greet the traveller's benison,  
Stoop thy pale visage thro' an amber cloud  
And disinherit Chaos,"

As his drawing utensils were always at hand, the scene was soon immortalised. The reflection of the moon on the river, and the indirect influence of its rays on the thatched roofs and luxuriant foliage, are effects that a master mind and master skill alone could have produced. Picturesque as are the cottages, we frankly own we had rather Dutchmen inhabited them than ourselves. Even the tall trees that increase the beauty of the scene must add to the unhealthy moisture of the atmosphere. This atmosphere was not braved with impunity by the great Dutch painters. These giants in art were almost all shortlived. There is great merit displayed in the composition of "The Rising Moon." The boats adorn without encumbering the surface of the river. The distant prospect of the town gives depth, and the dark shadows add to the tone of the *tout ensemble*. The peasants who are cleansing the fish form a striking group, and add to the life and reality of the scene: they are genuine natives of Holland; the "gentle moon" does not "light them to their love," it lights them to their labour. Possibly these figures are by the great Cuyper. As we before observed, his pencil was at the service of Van der Neer (supposed by some to have been his pupil). We find no record of the price obtained for this picture; but it ought to have sold well, for it is rich in merit. Pictures like this "Rising Moon" may be appreciated even by those connoisseurs who have formed their taste and improved their time in the classic region of the Pyrenees. There is, moreover, something original about this night scene. Generally the moon is represented high in the heavens, as if she had attracted the gaze of those who had not sought her. The fact is, even artists themselves do not sufficiently study the appearance of the heavens, and as for the rest of mankind, we are well aware that few, except houseless vagrants, couriers, and watchmen, have ever observed the actual rising of either sun or moon. Sincerely do we hope that the publicity given through the "Art Treasures" to the paintings of such

men as Rembrandt, Ruysdael, and Van der Neer, may lead us to consider the question where these treasures were originally discovered; these pictures, which modern science and enterprise have multiplied for the benefit of the million—these pictures form, indeed, the most valuable part of the archives of the nobleman, and are in many instances the mirrors of morning and night scenes, of landscapes and river views, such as our own country can offer in abundance, but

“Wandering there, with brute unconscious gaze,”

we overlook the beauties of nature. Our minds are often too pre-occupied, always too prosaic. The feverish thirst for gold dries up the fountains of pure enjoyment. In our unenthusiastic *nil admirari*, the plains, the rivers, and the fields display their charms in vain. The heavenly bodies rise and set, but, while we can count our gains, we care not whether it be by sunlight or gaslight. All we dislike about the latter is the tax we have to pay for it. But poets and painters still revel in the glories of Creation. They understand each other, they are each other's interpreters. Van der Neer himself would have listened to the effusions of the gifted Mrs. Robinson, when she exclaims—

“I have seen the pale moon from her silver veil peep,  
As she rose from her cloud dappled bed;  
I have marked the dread hurricano yell 'mid the deep,  
And its lightning play over my head.

“I have sighed o'er the sod where some lover was laid,  
I have torn the rude weeds from his breast,  
I have deckt it with flowers, and oft I have said,  
How I envy thy pallet of rest.

“I have seen the tall forest o'ershadow the glade,  
And extend its broad branches on high!  
But how soon have I marked its rich canopy fade,  
And its yellow leaves hurled to the sky.

“Since such are the scenes of this valley of care,  
Since each pleasure is mingled with pain,  
Oh! let me the raptures of sympathy share,  
And my bosom shall scorn to complain.”

The poetess is right. None should complain who can meet with sympathy. But the selfish, hardening influences of the age

“Freeze the genial current of the soul.”

The study of the fine arts tends to correct this evil, and those are the real benefactors of their kind who assist us in appreciating all that is lovely, ennobling, and sublime, whether in painting, literature, or music. But painting has this advantage, that it is at once our preceptor and our example, and we hope that many a young artist among our readers has endeavoured to represent some of the effects produced by the great masters of the Dutch school. No other *répertoire* supplies such good models for copying as the “Evenings,” the “Mornings,” and the “Moonlights” of Arnould Van der Neer.

### HIS MERITS.

The glance of melancholy, which Byron calls “a fearful gift,” is almost unknown to the mercurial inhabitants of Southern Europe. Even in France it is only of late years that the icy breath of the North has tempered the constitutional gaiety of the Gaul with a *nuance* of melancholy. For this reason the masterpieces of Ruysdael and Van der Neer, so much valued and admired in our own country, have never found a ready market in France. The national taste, however, in that country is undergoing a change, and we now find that many Frenchmen are willing to indorse the following favourable criticism of Alfred Michiels:—“What poetical dreams, what vagrant thoughts the pieces of Van der Neer inspire! He is most successful in moonlight scenes, which he reproduces with marvellous skill. A silver river slowly winds its way through the landscape. The tall bulrushes cluster

along its banks. At a little distance lie a few scattered huts, and further inland we catch a glimpse of the indented borders of the forest. The rays of the moon give a silvery tone to the surface of the wave, and now a brilliant line of light divides it, from which a wan and watery reflection tinges even



RIVER SCENE. FROM A PAINTING BY VAN DER MEER.

the slightest ripples. Around the Queen of Night is a circle of motley clouds which shed an uncertain light through the darkness. The moon shines in the midst, and is the goddess of the darkened hemisphere, whose form would be invisible but for her. Goethe himself never conceived a more inspired scene."



At the time that Van de. Neer painted his silent night scenes, no Frenchman would have dreamed of discovering in them the sentiment which had inspired the painter; none would have penned the criticism we have just quoted. These poetical ebullitions of feeling were as yet unknown to the stout heart and matter-of-fact good sense of the Frenchman of that day. Scarcely had he a faint sus-

THE RISING MOON. FROM A PAINTING BY VAN DER NEER.



picion, previous to the literary revolution of the nineteenth century, of the meaning of *La Montaigne*, when he spoke of "the delicate relish of melancholy."

The fact of this growing appreciation among the French of the melancholy, moon-struck Van der Neer is probably owing to the Anglo mania, which, although it preceded *la belle alliance*, has certainly been increased by it. And a *belle alliance* it is! that of wealthy, hearty, honest John Bull—fine fellow in his prime!—with that sprightly coquette *la belle France*.

And *la belle France* is adopting many of the fashions, and imbibing many of the tastes, of John Bull. All the *élégantes* in Paris are wearing tartan stripes, *à la militaire*, on their skirts, in honour of those brave Highlanders, who are true Britons, and are part of our triple kingdom, and as dear to England as if they were born south of the Tweed. The taste for that "Chinese nymph of tears, green tea," for English novels, and "the moon," with her attendant melancholy, is spreading from Paris to the farthest provinces, or rather departments; and ere long, such painters as Van der Neer will be as popular with the French as with ourselves. And yet it is scarcely fair to this great and singular genius to say, "such painters as Van der Neer," for, in truth, there are none such.

There are painters of moonlit scenes; but there is no other painter of moonlight, with its silvery transparency and spiritualising purity. Moore sings sweetly of "maids who love the moon." No maid ever loved, wooed, watched, and worshipped the moon as did this great painter, who devoted a life, which was one long night, to the close and passionate study of every change that stole over that fair face, which smiled on him as on that shepherd of old, Endymion, the moon's boy.

---

## JOHN ASSELYN.

---



HOLLAND was the nursery of landscape painters. During the course of the seventeenth century the Dutch school produced many first-rate artists in this style, and among the number John Asselyn is one of the most original, prolific, and pleasing.

In discussing the characteristics of this painter, Albert Aubert exclaims, "Asselyn is so mild and so loveable, so impregnated with everything that is most sweet and soothing in nature! In the foreground of his piece is a straud, some cattle are watering at the stream. Half buried in the shadow of the arch of a bridge, supported upon pillars composed either of bricks or the rough material of the rock, and cemented with patches of mortar now

overgrown with grass which conceals the fabric, are horses, asses, and goats. Beyond the rocky bank of the further side of the river spread, far in the distance, undulating grassy meadows. On the horizon the heavens glow with the mild glory of a summer sunset. Higher up some golden-fringed clouds float in the deep azure of the calm vault of heaven.

This picture, such as I have represented it, is extant. Does the site of it really exist? I know not, nor do I care; for whether it exists or not, it is not the less certain that all the objects which are here represented are copied from nature."

The celebrated connoisseur who penned this criticism was of opinion that the genius of the painter should emancipate him from any servile imitation of nature. He seems to think that nature should be subservient to the genius of the painter. Nature provides the subject matter, nay, more than the subject matter, she furnishes fire, energy, inspiration. This inspiration the artist must both feel and express. "Nature," says the critic, "may display all her beauty, she may smile in the sunshine and weep in the shade, but she is neither felt nor described. She exists without the assistance of Asselyn, but without *him*, who would be impregnated with her peacefulness, her sweetness, her loveliness! without him the canvas might indeed represent the place, but it would never be a picture. It is the master skill of the artist alone which can inspire such thoughts, and solve the problems which touch even the very foundation of art."

Asselyn was a master of his art, but the rank that he occupied in the school to which he belonged is a matter of opinion. Those who prefer the calm, the lovely, and the suggestive in nature to bold and startling effects, place him, as a landscape painter, between Claude Lorraine and Both; and as a painter of animals, between Karel Dujardin and Bamboche."

Great, however, and unquestionable as are his merits, the French biographer Descamps never once makes mention of him; and though Houbraken does not entirely ignore his existence, his notice

is meagre and unsatisfactory. The other biographers are guilty of innumerable errors in their account of Asselyn. So widely do they differ in their dates and details, that while some say that he was born in 1567, others make the date of his birth 1610. It is quite impossible to reconcile such discrepancies, but we think it most probable that he was born in Holland, somewhere about the year 1610, and that he was the pupil of Isaiah van de Velde, from whom he learnt to paint those battle-scenes for which, as all amateurs are aware, he was afterwards so famous. Sandrart also corroborates this opinion, and as he was a personal friend of Asselyn, his testimony is very valuable. Sandrart speaks of Amsterdam as the birthplace of Asselyn.

It is quite certain that Asselyn started for Italy in the early part of his professional career, and that after inspecting the principal galleries on the road, he made a long stay at Rome, where his own artistic countrymen gave him the name of *Crabbetje* (Dutch for little crab), on account of the malformation of the fingers of one of his hands, which were bent inwards, like the claws of a crab. Nevertheless, deformed as he was, he had a bold and easy touch and a light and graceful style.

Rome, at the time of his residence there, was the focus of an illustrious band of painters. But the masters whose manner had the greatest attractions for Asselyn were Claude Lorraine and Bamboche. What a curious contrast! How strange it seems that he should have bestowed an equal amount of admiration on two celebrities so entirely different in style, tone, and handling. The one devoting all his energies to the study of light and shade and to the solemn grandeur of the landscape; the other revelling in tavern scenes, and translating upon canvas all the wit, the humour, and the sallies of his buoyant and lively character—uniting, indeed, in his own person, all the qualifications of the poet, the painter, and the pantomimist. Asselyn was, nevertheless, an equal admirer of these two different artists. Their productions gratified at once both the taste which Italian scenery had given him, and the predisposition, which exists in all Dutchmen, for the commonplace enjoyments of a low and sensual life.

Asselyn followed the example of Claude in making a careful survey of the environs of Rome, not, however, for the purpose of discovering the effects of sunshine in an Italian landscape, but with the view of copying, one after another, the noble scenes which he stumbled over at every step, and with which he has so skilfully varied his landscape. Whether he had a more correct appreciation of the beauties of nature than most of the contemporary artists of his own country, or whether his intimacy with Claude Lorraine may have enlarged his sympathies, we know not, but it is evident that from one cause or the other he acquired a classical refinement which did not prevent him from preserving intact the simplicity of his Dutch character. Those crumbling monuments of Roman greatness—those ruinous but still imperishable records of the world-wide supremacy of the *domina rerum*, or *mistress of empires*, he studied under every aspect and at all hours of the day. He knew them by rote. His soul sympathised with the mournful appearance of “the lone mother of dead empires,” and he lingered for days over those relics which reminded him most forcibly of the incidents of her glorious history. Cicero’s villa, or rather a fragment of that sacred edifice whence the Tusculan disputations take their date, would keep him spell-bound for hours. The tottering arches of the Frascati Aqueduct, along which the water was conveyed to the Palace of the Cæsars, would now engross all his attention; and further on, the circular Temple of the Sibyl at Tivoli, the chapters of whose Corinthian columns have been despoiled of their distinctive acanthus, employed his imitative powers.

Several times did Asselyn attempt a design of the gigantic ruins of that magnificent amphitheatre of Marcellus, so famous under the name of the Coliseum, which James Callot at the same time was engraving so faithfully and so well. These eternal ruins Asselyn succeeded at last in representing in a style that satisfied his own fastidious taste. That garb of green, which hides the ravages of time upon the crumbling stone, and those innumerable shrubs and flowers which now cover the arena where once the groans of the dying gladiator excited the admiration of a conquering but cruel people, are, through the magic power of Asselyn’s brush, beautifully illustrative of our own poet’s description:—

“ And here the buzz of eager nations ran,  
In murmured pity or loud roared applause,  
As man was slaughtered by his fellow man.  
And wherefore slaughtered? Wherefore, but because



JOHN ASSELYN. FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF.



Such were the bloody circus' genial laws  
And the imperial pleasure. Wherefore not !  
What matters where we fall to fill the maws  
Of worms—on battle plains or listed spot :  
Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

I see before me the gladiator lie:  
He leans upon his hand ; his manly brow  
Consents to death, but conquers agony ;  
And his drooped head sinks gradually low,  
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow  
From the red gash, fall heavy one by one,  
Like the first of a thunder shower ; and now  
The arena swims around him—he is gone,  
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hailed the wretch who won."

Or still more specifically descriptive of Asselyn's illustration  
is the following verse :—

" But when the rising moon begins to climb  
The topmast arch, and gently pauses there ;  
When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,  
And the low night breeze waves along the air  
The garland forest which the gray walls wear,  
Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head ;  
When the light shines serene, but doth not glare,  
Then in this magic circle raise the dead :  
Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their dust ye tread,

## "THE TROOPER."

In comparing Asselyn with Karel Dujardin, whom he resembles in many particulars, we are obliged to own that in the latter there is more depth of sentiment, and more intimate knowledge of character. The former is rather influenced by the superficial appearance of things, and studies effects more than causes. On this account he has a lively appreciation of the phenomena of light. Illumined by the sun, the landscape appears to his eyes magnificent and sublime, but without that charm of mystery which was so highly attractive in some of his contemporaries. Now Karel Dujardin, although he was less imposing in the *tout ensemble* of his piece, was more effective in his details. There are, however, many points in which these two masters resemble each other—points which prove how true they both were to their great mistress, Nature. The picture of "The Trooper," from which our



THE TROOPER. FROM A PAINTING BY JOHN ASSELYN.

engraving is copied, is characteristic of both. The scene is one of very common occurrence in Italy. The trooper is arranging the caparison of his steed, while a youth in attendance upon him is drawing up water from the well for his horse. If we can conceive a vine twisting its tendrils over the aperture of the picturesque cavern, and an Italian sky with its dazzling sun without, we shall have a piece which would be as characteristic of Karel Dujardin as of Asselyn. The ray of sunshine which struggles through the fissures in the rock illumines the croup of the saddle of the gray horse, which is brought into relief through the transparent obscurity of the cavern. At the other end of the grotto we see a rudely carved stone staircase which has been hewn in the rock, at the top of which stands the beast of the muleteer who is ascending it. Neither Peter de Laer, Dujardin, nor Wouvermans ever achieved any production more pleasing than this, nor anything in which the *chiaro-oscuro* is more artistically managed. "The Trooper" is one of Asselyn's most beautiful *chefs-d'œuvre*. Claessens has reproduced it in an engraving executed with consummate skill.

"HORSES AND ASSES WATERING."

Asselyn's excursions in the neighbourhood of Rome had always a professional object. In his pursuit of pleasure he did not forget that he was a painter. His drawing utensils were ever at hand, and from the inspiration of the moment he sketched villages, antiquities, figures, everything in fact that arrested his attention. The number, says D'Argenville, of the paintings he executed while sojourning at Rome and at Venice is quite miraculous. One day two young pilgrims of the softer sex were struck by his steadfast attention to a view he was sketching, and asked permission to see the progress he was making. They were enthusiastic in their praise, and the painter, emboldened by their familiarity, begged to know the cause of their pilgrimage. "We are Germans," said the younger of the two: "our father has just married again, and, prompted by our cruel stepmother, wishes to force us to take the veil. As my sister and myself have a horror of a nunnery, we determined, after mature deliberation, to convert our jewels into money, and trust ourselves to Providence." "Alas! sweet ladies," said the painter, "you surely run many risks in this pilgrimage—so lovely and unprotected." No doubt, could he have known the verse, he would have addressed them in the words of the poet:—

"Maidens, do you not fear to stray,  
So lone and lovely through this bleak way!  
Are the sons of the South, then, so good or so cold,  
As not to be tempted by woman or gold!"

"We have," they replied, "made a vow to Venus, and we travel in full reliance upon her good offices in securing us each an excellent husband." The opportunity was very tempting to the susceptible painter, who at that time was "fancy free." There is, however, a fate in these things, and his hour was not yet come. The scene he was sketching at the moment was his celebrated *chef-d'œuvre* of "Cattle Watering," from which our engraving is copied. It is very certain that the light in this beautiful piece is deficient in the intensity, splendour, and magical beauty of that of Claude; but although the compass of his powers did not enable him to reach so high a note in the scale, our Dutch painter has represented with most praiseworthy and truthful accuracy the effects of sunshine and the freshness of the morning. The rocks, the ruins, and the foliage, which we remark in this "Cattle Watering" scene, are never heavy and obscure, but always enlivened by a reflection, for with him light permeates through everything; and that aerial perspective, of which he gained a knowledge from Claude, enables him to manage his horizons so that they gradually lose themselves in the distance. A luminous mist diffused over the atmosphere relieves the abrupt steepness of the rocks, as well as the harsh lines of the distant mountains and their uneven surfaces. We see in this "Watering" scene how the ambient tone of the air blends together the various shades of the landscape, joins earth, sky, and water, and forms of the different parts an harmonious whole, calm and sweet. It is an imitation of Claude's style, with less of originality about it. But Asselyn does not always succeed as well as he has done in this piece; sometimes his colours are badly blended, his skies and his sunlit plains are disfigured by a reddish tint, and his painting, instead of being delicately refined and almost as spirited as that of Claude, is deficient in transparency. It is, however, but seldom that we have to complain of these defects. For the most part he has been very happy, both in conception and execution. His gradation of tone in his sunset scenes is highly artistic, and it is in pieces such as these—less careless than those of Both, and less magnificent than those of Claude—that we trace the splendour of an Italian evening.

"THE FORD."

In the midst of these classical monuments of vanished greatness—monuments which would have inspired even the most unimpressible of his profession with a certain style and manner—Asselyn was able to indulge at once his own sympathetic nature and his admiration of truth by the simplicity of the figures with which he peopled his pictures. He visited Rome just at the period in which Nicholas Poussin was giving birth to historical landscape, and Claude Lorraine was shedding a flood of light over those Arcadian scenes which his own imagination had discovered. Asselyn, however, saw

through a different and more domestic medium these relics of Roman taste and civilisation. Where a Claude or a Poussin would have introduced a gigantic figure of Coriolanus, Pyrrhus, or perhaps even of Antony and Cleopatra, the Dutch artist painted but cows, goats, or horses only half-broken, and mules; whilst the Roman peasant was, with characteristic unconcern, ambling past the glorious trophies of the victories of Marius. "The Ford" is a lovely landscape, in which the painter has, perhaps unintentionally, created a contrast quite inspiring to the imagination of the poet. The homely occupation of the figures, contrasted with the memories which these *debris* of departed greatness bring back to the mind, is highly suggestive. We ask ourselves, can these really be the descendants of that race of conquerors—of the Scipios, the Camilli, the Gracchi?

" They fell devoted, but undying;  
The very gale their names seems sighing;  
Their spirits wrap the dusky mountain,  
Their memory sparkles o'er the fountain  
The silent pillar, lone and gray,  
Claims kindred with their sacred clay;  
The meanest rill, the mightiest river,  
Rolls mingling with their fame for ever.  
Despite of every yoke she bears,  
That land is glory's still—and theirs!"

Yes! it is the same beautiful land; but with nothing left it of its former self, except "the fatal gift of beauty." Her skies, which Asselyn has illumined, as we see in this piece, with so transparent, pure, and penetrating a light, are still her own; in all other respects, she is but the sepulchre of an extinct race of heroes:—

" Rome! Rome! thou art no more  
As thou hast been!  
On thy seven hills of yore  
Thou satst a Queen.  
Thou hadst thy triumphs then;  
Peopling thy street,  
Princes and sceptered men  
Bowed at thy feet.  
Rome! Rome! what hast thou now!  
Thou hast thy skies,  
Thou hast the sunset's glow,  
Rome! for thy dower,  
Flashing dark cypress grove,  
Temple, and tower."

These are the reminiscences of which Asselyn's piece of "The Ford" is peculiarly suggestive.

We have seen how he escaped the dangerous fascinations of the two lovely pilgrims. But, on his return from Italy, he made acquaintance at Lyons with an Antwerp merchant, who had two pretty daughters, of whom he was justly proud. Asselyn was this time fairly caught. The eldest was engaged to a Belgian artist of the name of Nicholas de Heldt-Stocade, whom Asselyn had known while at Venice. He soon became the captive of the younger daughter. He proposed for her, and was accepted; and in 1645 the two brothers-in-law returned to Holland with their respective wives. These particulars are gathered from the account which Houbraken gives of our artist. He had them direct from Laurent Franck, an historical painter, who was living at the time in the house of the Antwerp merchant, Asselyn's father-in-law.

### HIS MERITS.

In the world of amateurs the productions of Asselyn created a great sensation. There was a novelty about them that they fully appreciated. His clear, fresh, and transparent tints were the more pleasing, because they offered so complete a contrast to the harsh and abrupt greens of Paul Bril, and to the not less harsh or less abrupt blues of Breughel and Roland Savery. James Pinas, and his illustrious pupil Rembrandt, had accustomed the Dutch connoisseurs to strange and fantastic effects in

landscape painting; but Asselyn, who had successfully adopted Claude's handling and manner, surprised and delighted the academicians of his own country by a light and warmth which they had never seen, either in nature or in their own paintings. As Herman Swanevelt and John Both both returned from Italy about the same time as Asselyn, it so happened that the rays which they all three borrowed from Claude Lorraine, illumined all the paintings of the North, until Ruysdael, by enveloping



HORSES AND ASSES WATERING. FROM A PAINTING BY JOHN ASSELYN.

his landscape in the melancholy hues of his own sombre genius, proved how deep a pathos and real a poetry lay beneath a clouded sun and in a darkened prospect.

That Asselyn was the rage at Amsterdam is evident from the fact that Rembrandt, who at that time was painting or engraving the portraits of all his illustrious countrymen, took that of Asselyn in an aquafortis engraving. This engraving is perhaps the most beautiful and the most valuable of all that even Rembrandt has executed. It is a half-length portrait, with one hand resting on his hip, and with the other clenched on a table, upon which stand his palette and some books. He wears a



high and peaked hat, quite different to the hats of Clement de Jonghe, of Anslœ, and of the other painters whose portraits have been taken by Rembrandt. This hat, which is of an Italian shape, the painter continued to wear after his return from Rome. Rembrandt, in his portrait, has most skilfully



THE FORD. FROM A PAINTING BY JOHN ASSELYN.

concealed the deformed hands and distorted fingers of *Crabbetje*; so that he has actually taken advantage of a defect which would greatly have perplexed any other painter. The background of the engraving represents an easel, upon which stands an architectural landscape.

It was a lucky thing for Asselyn to have his portrait engraved by so celebrated a master, for all those whose features Rembrandt has reproduced have been immortalised, irrespective of their own individual merit, by the genius of their portrait painter. Who, in the present generation, would ever have heard of the name of Abraham France, of Burgomaster Six, or of Coppenel, if Rembrandt had

not honoured them with his friendship? But, in the case of Asselyn, his own merits were sufficient to insure an immortality. Without possessing any striking originality of style, his landscapes are immediately distinguishable from those of all the masters whose style he has unconsciously adopted or wilfully copied. If we compare him with Claude Lorraine, whose follower he undoubtedly was, we see at once that, even in his reproductions of the same effects of light and the same scenes, he differs from him in style and manner. Claude turned everything that he touched into gold, and always invests the nature that he represents with some portion of his own sublimity of character. His trees are not simply those that he has seen in his own grounds; they have forms, outlines, and waving boughs—not after the fashion of their nature, but according to the caprice of the painter. In the masterpieces of Claude everything recalls the era of Saturn and Ops. His temples, his terraces, his figures, skies, and seas, are all of the golden age. Asselyn, on the other hand, receiving simply, but yet deeply, the impressions of an Italian landscape, has reproduced on his own canvas its brilliant and beautiful characteristics. For him, unable as he was to reach the ideal conceptions of his great master, the scene itself, in all its matchless loveliness, was sufficient. He felt the beauty of those desolate solitudes only tenanted by ruins. These ruins are, in his pieces, their own interpreters; and he thought them more eloquent as he found them than any poetry of his could make them. It would be doing him injustice to say that he gazed with indifference upon those distant relics enwreathed with wild-flowers and shrouded with the mists of an Italian evening. No! He felt all the grandeur of the sacred spot; and has let the ruins of Cicero's villa and of the baths of Mænas speak for themselves.

But it is, above all, in his figures that Asselyn differs from Claude. These figures are all modern, and similar to those which we find in the rugged roads of Both's landscapes, in the pieces of Bamboche, and in some of the aquafortis engravings of Berghem. At one time it is a rustic clad in goatskin, urging forward his ass; at another, a horseman, hastening to reach the distant inn before dark; or a herdsman driving his cattle across a ford, in his endeavour to reach the rich pastures which lie at the base of the smiling hills, of which the wavy outline is lost in the horizon. One of the curious characteristics of Asselyn's figure-painting is, that when his figures are not the principal objects in the foreground, they are almost always with their backs to the painter, and seem to give an additional depth to his perspective by the manner in which they are introduced.

Asselyn's battle-pieces are almost as famous as his landscapes. They are somewhat in the style of his early master Isaiah van de Velde. When he returned from Rome he brought with him much of Bamboche's rough and off-hand manner. According to Sandrart, the picture-fanciers of Venice, Lyons, and Amsterdam were eager for his battle-scenes, wishing, no doubt, for a piece in which he would have the opportunity of displaying all his varied talents. The biographer Sandrart was himself in possession of one of these pieces, in which Asselyn represents the bridge of Solario, near Rome, assaulted by Croats and defended by knights in armour. Sandrart eulogises the action and the truth of this striking production; and as he was himself a painter of considerable reputation, his praise is very valuable.

Much, however, as amateurs admire the grace and beauty of Asselyn's *chefs-d'œuvre*, he is not among the number of those whose works increase every year in value. But although he does not rank with Van de Velde, Wouvermans, Both, Ruysdael, or Claude Lorraine, he retains his place in public museums and private galleries. In the gallery of the Louvre there are four celebrated pictures by Asselyn,—a view of "The Bridge of the Lamentano on the Teverone"—"A Landscape"—"A View of the Tiber"—a view of "Ruins in the Campagna." In the Bridgewater collection there is also "A View of the Tiber." Neither at Hampton Court nor in the National Gallery is there a single piece by Asselyn. The highest price as yet given for any single production of his was 2,460 francs, or about £100, for a landscape, at the sale of Blondel de Gagny, in 1776. In this landscape there are both on the right hand and on the left houses and rocks. In the foreground is a lady dressed in blue, riding a gray horse, together with eight other figures.

## JOHN BREUGHEL.



IOGRAPHERS have bequeathed us but scanty materials for a memoir of Breughel. He went by the name of Velvet Breughel, or Breugel *de Velours*; and even the reason for his acquiring this epithet is disputed. Baron Heinicke asserts that it was given to the artist on account of the fineness of his touch. But this has absurdity on the very face of it. The paintings of Breughel are not remarkable for fineness. They have great merit, but it is not the merit of delicacy or softness.

John Breughel was called *Velvet Breughel* from the fact of his constantly wearing velvet. His parents were originally peasants, residing in the village of Breughel (whence the artist's name), and this village of Breughel is situated near Breda.

His father became an artist, and was entitled Peter Breughel the *Facetious*. He gained this *sobriquet* from the subjects of his paintings. These represent country festivities, fun, and frolics. His sketches are something in the style of Hogarth. In the exquisite hilarity of his works, Peter the *Facetious* is almost unrivalled.

John Breughel was born at Brussels, but in what year we cannot exactly say. However, it is evident from authentic records, that he was admitted a member of the corporation of Antwerp in 1597. Our artist received his education at Alost, in the house of Peter Koeck's widow: she was related to him through his mother. In the first instance he learnt miniature and water colour painting, and displayed such talent for these branches of art that his early efforts were considered quite extraordinary.

At length John Breughel gained admission into the painting room of Peter Goëkindt. The mere fact of his admission was as advantageous to him as a regular course of instruction elsewhere. Madame de Genlis aptly observes that "the eyes have absolute power over the soul." How doubly applicable is this observation to the case of a painter, whose eye performs the office of the daguerreotype, rather than that of the mirror that retains no impression.

Some assert that Velvet Breughel was his father's pupil. This statement is not borne out by fact. There is no resemblance between the works of Breughel the *Facetious* and those of his more celebrated son.

In the sixteenth century a journey to Italy was the necessary part of a painter's career. John Breughel therefore started early in life for the south. He remained some time at Cologne, probably fascinated by the romantic interest that antiquity always possesses for an imaginative mind. We can fancy him wandering through the narrow ecclesiastical streets, and recalling the wild legend of St. Ursula's arrival, with her nine thousand attendant virgins, pure and blooming, from the green hills and vales of happy Albion. With what images of grace and loveliness must the artist's mind have been stored when association conjured up this poetical tradition of Cologne. Nor can we suppose Breughel neglected to visit the neighbouring city of Aix-la-Chapelle, the birthplace of the conqueror of the better part of Europe. How could Breughel fail, impressed as he was with admiration of all that is great and noble, to reproduce (through the magic powers of his art) that ancient cathedral that still contains the bones of Charlemagne—of that great ruler whose vigorous mind still influences posterity?

But even from the birthplace or the abode of conquerors, Breughel must have returned with pleasure to Cologne, for Cologne stands upon "the banks of Rhine." Here the artist may have been struck, for the first time, with the picturesque charms of river scenery, with the effect of the forested bark on the winding stream, and the reflection of Nature's beauty in Nature's mirror; and, fortunately for Breughel, he was a devoted worshipper at her shrine. He sketched every striking object around him, without waiting to work up these sketches into finished pictures.

In the circumscribed landscapes on the banks of the Rhine, inclosed, as they are, by rocks of primeval granite, Breughel acquired the *multum in parvo* art. He learned how to group numerous



BREUGHEL DE VELOURS. FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF.

objects together in a small compass ; and his talent was remarkable in giving to each its proper place and proper proportions. And who shall say that Breughel reaped only these advantages from familiarity with magnificent prospects ? The Rhine and its romantic banks may have inspired *him* as they did our own bard, some centuries later. At least, we may suppose that the pretty village girls were as lovely in the young painter's eyes as in those of the poet, and that beauty in the abstract would be more likely to influence the imagination of Breughel than of the *blasé* spoilt child of fortune and of fame.



"The castled crag of Drachenfels  
Looks o'er the wide and winding Rhine,  
Whose breast of waters broadly swells  
Beneath the banks that bear the vine.  
And hills all rich with blossomed trees,  
And fields that promise corn and wine,  
And scattered cities crowning these,  
Whose far white walls along them shine,  
Have formed a scene that I should see  
With double joy wert thou with me.

"And peasant girls with deep blue eyes,  
And hands that offer early flowers,  
Walk smiling o'er this paradise.  
Around the frequent feudal towers

Through green leaves lift their walls of gray,  
 And many a rock that steeply lowers,  
 And noble arch in proud decay,  
 Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers ;  
 But one thing want these banks of Rhine,—  
 Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine !

“ I send the flowers given to me,  
 Although before they meet thy touch  
 I know that they must withered be,—  
 But yet reject them not as such,—  
 For I have treasured them as dear,  
 Because they still will meet thine eye,  
 And guide thy soul to mine even here,  
 When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,  
 And know'st them gathered by the Rhine,  
 And offered from my soul to thine.



THE WAYSIDE SHRINE. FROM A PAINTING BY BRUEGHEL.

“ The river nobly came and flows,  
 The charm of this enchanted ground,  
 And all its thousand turns disclose  
 Some fresher beauty varying round.  
 The loftiest breast its wish might bound  
 Through life to dwell delighted here ;  
 Nor could a spot on earth be found  
 To beauty and to me more dear,  
 Could thy dear eyes, in following mine,  
 Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine.”

Who can wonder at the happy effect of scenery like that of “The banks of Rhine” on our young painter's imagination ! Nevertheless, it was not in landscape that he first distinguished himself. It was a flower piece that established his reputation at Cologne. This picture was entitled “The Judgment of Solomon ;” but it had nothing to do with the wise man's decision in the case of the two mothers. The subject of Bruegel's “Judgment of Solomon” is the Queen of Sheba's test of the king's

wisdom. She is seen presenting to the monarch real and artificial flowers, while he, in his turn, lets loose

"The heaven-taught bee, whose instinct cannot err."

Of course, the flowers form the principal objects in this picture, since it is ostensibly a flower piece.

John Breughel always delighted in that rich and vivid colouring which Nature only sports occasionally, at least in our hemisphere. This taste he shared with Paul Bril, Coninxloo, David Vickenbooms, and Roland Savery. John Breughel used up all the brightest colours on his palette, in all their pristine purity and integrity, and without any attempt at neutralising or softening their tone. His blues and greens are as dazzling as were those in vogue among the first painters in oils, Hubert and John Van Eyck. It is a mistake to attribute this rawness of tone to the perishable nature of the varnish which some connoisseurs pretend softened and blended the colours when the picture first left the artist's hands.

Ignorant and clumsy picture-cleaners, who call themselves "restorers," but some of whom we designate "destroyers," may have injured the surface of some of these old paintings, but others have been handed down to us in a state of perfect preservation, and even in these specimens the colouring is so brilliant and gaudy that it wounds and wearies the eye.

But not only in the Low Countries and in Germany did the first painters employ prismatic hues of dazzling brightness; in Italy and Spain we find art at its birth arrayed in all the colours of the rainbow. The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, with the painted windows of their cathedrals, which were like sheets of precious stones, and their illuminated MSS. rich in every brilliant hue, influenced the tastes of painters and people.

From Cologne, where the beauties of the Rhine country had long delayed him, Breughel set out for Rome, whither his fame had already preceded him. In the Eternal City he made the acquaintance of a Cardinal Frederick Borromée, who became his patron, retained him for a time as a member of his household, and made him paint many small pieces which were afterwards disposed of at Milan. Some of these are ranked by connoisseurs among the *chef-d'œuvre* of the Flemish master. Such, for instance, as "Daniel in the Lion's Den," "The Interior of the Cathedral of Antwerp," "St. Hierome in the Desert," and a painting on copper of "The Four Elements."

No traveller ever visited the public library at Milan without stopping to admire those wonderful pieces which are so well calculated to display all Breughel de Velours' varied talents. His fertile imagination could make of Earth a Garden of Eden, and such was his universality of talent that he could paint with life-like reality all figures of men and beasts, and faithfully describe every detail of still life. Innumerable are the artists who have designed allegorical pictures of the four elements. Breughel, however, was original in his conception of a hackneyed theme. His tableau on this subject did not consist of a series of uninteresting allegories, or of a picture reproduced for the hundredth time of the pleasures which earth, air, fire, and water can procure for us. On the contrary, he carries us back to the simple history of the creation. On sheets of copper, not more than two feet square, he conceived the idea of representing the whole world—all the beasts of the field, all the birds of the air, all the fish of the sea, and he has enlivened the scene with a freshness of tone, a brilliancy of light, and a profusion of details which have been the admiration of spectators for the last two centuries. "I know of no painter," says Cambry, "whose colouring leaves a livelier impression on the memory." Breughel knew how to vie successfully with the splendours of nature. In his "Elements," the earth, or rather "Terra," is not the symbolical figure of woman, surmounted by the head of a Cybele, but his "Terra" is the material matter-of-fact earth that we tread upon, clothed with verdure, adorned with flowers, shaded with trees—the earth, indeed, which all animals inhabit, tame and wild, savage and shy.

Breughel seems to have had a lively vision of the morning and the evening of the fifth day of the creation, when, upon the emerald carpet of Eden's lawn, all the beasts of the forest and the plain mingled together in friendship and fondness, and the lion had no terrors for the lamb. According to the fashion of the age in which he lived, he makes fire the representative of everything useful and ornamental. The tools of the alchemist, all utensils, whether of metal or of glass, that are fused in the furnace, vessels, vases, armour, everything indeed in which fire is the transforming agent, is

reproduced with consummate skill by the artistic pencil of Breughel, whose prolific imagination supplies him with varied and beautiful designs.

*The air* is peopled with birds, butterflies, chafers, and insects on the wing that a microscopic power alone can discern, in all their variety of hues and forms. The feathery glories of the Chinese pheasant vie with the brilliant hues of the bird of paradise and the starry wonders of the peacock's tail.

The watery element teems with a prodigious number of fish and shells, but he here blends with the authentic history of creation many of the fictions of mythology. The wide expanse of waters is subject to the sway of an amorous Naiad. Even the scaly carp own "the soft impeachment;" and to render still more effective the beautiful colouring of this highly-finished piece, the painter has managed to introduce all the lively and varied hues of the rainbow. "The objects in this design," says Cochin, "are so diminutive, that their production in so small a compass is one of the marvels of art;" but when seen through a magnifying-glass the astonishment of the beholder is still further increased by the wonderful accuracy and truthfulness with which, as he will perceive, fish, flesh, and fowl are all represented. So life-like are they, that they seem to be actually in motion. Their outline is so correct, and their colouring so true to nature, that even when discerned through the magnifier their "finish" is unimpeachable.

#### "THE WAYSIDE SHRINE."

This piece is painted on copper, and is scarcely larger in size than our engraving. It forms part of the valuable collection of M. Jules Duclos, a picture-fancier as kind and obliging as he is discriminating and accomplished. The productions of this master, unlike those of many of his contemporaries, have rather lost than gained in public estimation during the lapse of the last two centuries. Breughel de Velours has his faults. He has been justly taxed with a violation of the laws of aerial perspective. His distances are of so harsh a blue that they do not vanish imperceptibly. He fatigues the eye by the predominance of reds in the garments of his figures, and the greens, of which he is so fond, are too bright to be pleasing. But in spite of these defects—and defects they certainly are—Breughel is a painter of the highest pretensions, and so admirable in landscape, that he can render the most commonplace and unpromising views interesting and picturesque. His scenes in Flanders, of which this "Wayside Shrine" is one of the most perfect in conception and execution, are the most popular of all his works. There is no question that the estimation in which these views are held, is, in a great measure, owing to the admirable manner in which they have been engraved by Lebas, who has corrected all the defects of Breughel's colouring. In these scenes are united the peculiarities of Ostade with the genius of Teniers; and as to the landscape, Paul Bril himself has never displayed more spirit or greater loveliness, lightness, and firmness. They who are acquainted with the level monotony of the plains about Antwerp, will admire the skill with which Breughel has made the pictures which reproduce them interesting through the introduction of wayfarers on horseback and foot, of the interminable rows of trees which line the sides of the long, straight roads, paved with granite, and of the various vehicles of traffic which traverse them. The clock-tower of the Cathedral of Antwerp figures in almost all these pieces; and now and then the level landscape is varied by the appearance of a windmill, or by the addition of a family of barn-door fowls chuckling at the entrance of a smiling village, through which runs a meandering brook.

#### "THE WAGON."

In Breughel's best pieces there is continuous action, and in this respect he is exactly the reverse of Ruysdael. The whole object of the one is to give domesticity to his pieces. They are in all respects the haunts of men. Everything indicates life, activity, reproduction, fertility, gregariousness, civilisation, progress, industry, and inventive perception. There is no tameness, no stagnation, no stereotyped characteristics, even in the monotonous scenes from which he necessarily copied his *tableaux*. Ruysdael, on the contrary, avoids, as he would the plague, every trace of his race; and it is on this account that the *chefs-d'œuvre* of these two great masters form so striking a contrast. This wagon scene teems with animation. The fertility of the painter's fancy transforms our dreary earth into a

Garden of Eden. Peace and Plenty are the order of the day, and with the enviable power he possessed of representing nature under all her phases and in every style, he was never at a loss.

The historians of the time differ as to the date at which Breughel completed his professional education at Rome. Mariette says that he was certainly there in the year 1593. "This date," adds he, "I find on a drawing of the Coliseum, sketched by Breughel in the August of that year." And it seems probable that he was only admitted as a graduate into the brotherhood of St. Luke after his return from Italy. It is quite clear that he was back at Antwerp in 1597, as in the following year



THE WAGON. FROM A PAINTING BY BREUGHEL.

Rubens was admitted into the same brotherhood, and set out for Italy in 1600. It seems, therefore, likely that Breughel and Rubens became intimate at this time, and began to paint in a kind of partnership of talent. There are many pieces executed by Rubens in the early part of his career which Breughel ornamented with flowers. The Madonnas painted by "the Prince of Painters" were the subjects which our artist loved to incase in garlands of lilies, tulips, jessamines, and roses, diversified by gaily-coloured butterflies, cockchafers, and birds of beautiful plumage, amongst which always figures the pet parrot of the painter. Rubens's brilliant colouring would have eclipsed every other fellow-labourer's work; but Breughel shines with an independent lustre, even side by side with



Rubens, and Rubens is the only painter who can command the admiration of all beholders for his figure pieces, even in the midst of the beautiful bouquets of his friend.

VIEW NEAR BRUGES. FROM A PAINTING BY BREUGHEL.



So often did Breughel de Velours reproduce a terrestrial paradise, that he has been surnamed "Breughel de Paradis," in contradistinction to his brother, Peter Breughel, who was commonly known

by the name of "Breughel de l'Enfers." The figures in these scenes of Paradise are sometimes the handiwork of Henry Van Balen; as, for instance, in the picture in the Louvre. Sometimes they have been introduced by Henri de Klerck, and sometimes by Rubens himself.

In the museum of La Haye there is a magnificent painting of "Paradise," the joint production of Rubens and Breughel de Velours. In the foreground, the "Prince of Painters" has placed the figures of Adam and Eve, while a finely proportioned bay-horse occupies the corner of the piece. At the foot of a tree, which, like Adam himself, had known no progenitor, is seated the first of human mould; beside him stands Eve, in all her naked grace and beauty. With the object of developing the perfect proportions of the mother of mankind, the artist has represented her as raising her hand, to pluck the fatal apple,

"Source of all our woes;"

which the Serpent, twisted round the branches of the tree, is enticing her to taste. These figures Rubens has executed with the most praiseworthy care. It is true that the Eve is still, in her redundant proportions, the prototype of Isabella Brandt. But, though some may object to the *embonpoint*, all must acknowledge the merit of the colouring. There is a finish and a refinement about these figures, which are seldom the characteristics of the productions of the great master; but he seems to have been anxious that they should harmonise with the precious gems of Breughel. Contrary to his usual practice, Rubens has affixed his autographic signature to this picture, which bears also that of Breughel de Velours. Myriads of birds and beasts people this paradise of the first of "human mould," which is intersected by running brooks, and is redolent of the incense of flowers. The deer sports his branching antlers among the boughs of the forest; the brindled tiger and the placid cow are playing together on the grass; and the lion is peacefully standing in the midst of the flock of sheep, who require as yet no shepherd; the peacock is displaying the painted glories of his tail at the feet of Eve, who plants her model foot between the dog and the cat, as though she already hesitated between loyalty and treachery. This picture, which is here minutely described, because it gives an adequate idea of the style of Breughel de Velours, came from the collection of M. Delacourt Van der Voost, at Leyden, from whom it was purchased by the stadtholder for the museum of La Haye, at the price of 7,350 florins, or nearly £800.

Breughel married, at Antwerp, a fair Fleming, whose beauty has been celebrated in Flemish verse by the painter-poet, Cornelius Shut. The fruit of this union was a daughter, of the name of Ann Breughel, famous for having had three illustrious guardians during her minority—this same Cornelius Shut, Van Balen, and Rubens; but still more famous for having been the wife of David Teniers.

#### "VIEW NEAR BRUGES."

Breughel was connected, in one way or another, with nearly all the great painters of his time and country. When Vandyck began that magnificent gallery of painters' portraits, which Lucas Wosterman, Pontius, Bolswert, and Peter de Jode have engraved, he did Breughel the special honour of tracing his portrait, in aquafortis, with his own hand; and the engraving is one of the best that even Vandyck himself has ever executed. It is really quite curious to see how a few lines and points, sketched by the master hand of Vandyck, can impart life, expression, and character to the figure of Breughel. The intimacy that subsisted between the different members of the artistic brotherhood of St. Luke, accounts for the introduction of so much joint workmanship in their separate pieces, even where no such foreign aid was necessary. Surely, so famous in landscape as Rubens was, he could have painted the background of his historical pieces himself; and it must have been either from freak or favour that he applied to Wildens, Van Uden, or Breughel de Velours for a landscape, or a garland of flowers, to accompany his figures. In the same way, if Breughel asked his friend Rubens, or Van Balen, to paint the figures in his "Paradise," or Rotenhamer to paint the holy wayfarers in "their flight into Egypt," it was from no want of capacity in himself. No painter, indeed, of his time was more *au fait* at figure-drawing. Of this he has given indisputable proof in his "Scenes in Flanders," and especially in his "View near Bruges," which we reproduce in the accompanying engraving. Indeed, his skill in this department of his art was so great, and so universally acknowledged, that his professional brethren came from all parts to ask for his assistance.

It has frequently happened that, while Van Balen and Henri de Klerck were enlivening the emerald bowers of Breughel with their beautiful nymphs, Breughel himself was artistically driving a flock of sheep through the landscape of a friend, or actually peopling with figures and animals the mountainous sites of Josse de Momper. Often has he undertaken to introduce a crowd of supplicants into the interior of the churches of Peter Neefs and Henry Steenwyck. These crowds Breughel was very fond of painting; and he was never occupied more to his own satisfaction than when he was cramming a large number of subjects into a canvas too small to hold them. He was very clever in representing devotees kneeling, in long files, before the shrine of the Antwerp cathedral, while the canons were sitting in the choir, or the choristers round the organ; and he loved to paint the various members of a large family, clothed in their Sunday best, as they passed in procession before the pauper crowd who were come to witness the public baptism of the infant heir.

"One of the most beautiful pieces of Breughel," says Mariette, "is in the collection of the Prince Eugène of Savoy. The subject is the annual procession of twelve virgins, which takes place at Brussels, in conformity with the rules laid down by the Infanta Isabella, who founded the order." In this piece the painter has introduced a number of figures, which are designed with consummate taste and skill. So admirably are the different heads touched off, that they have been often taken for the work of Vandyck. His peculiar excellence, however, consisted in the production of landscapes, animals, and flowers, which he painted with great spirit and high "finish."

Félibien places the death of Breughel in the year 1642. This record does not tally with the date affixed in the catalogue to a *tableau*, entitled "Scipio Africanus before Carthage." The piece is thus described: "*Breughel, 1660, fec. anversd.*" As, however, in the year 1660, Breughel would have been eighty-five years old, and as it is not probable that, at that advanced age, he could have painted so remarkable a piece, it seems most likely that the author of the catalogue has made some mistake. Moreover, as Breughel's daughter, Ann, had three guardians at the time of her marriage with David Teniers, which took place previous to the year 1660, her father could not have been alive at the time. We may, therefore, consider that Félibien's account is, after all, the correct one.

## NICHOLAS BERGHEM.



ELANCIOUSLY is the characteristic of most of the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the painters of the North. There are, however, some remarkable exceptions. Berghem's pictures, full of light, life, liveliness, and gaiety, form a striking contrast to the sombre-tinted pieces of Everdingen, the two Ruysdaels, Isaac Van Ostade, and Van Goyen, who, if they allow daylight any admission into their *tableaux*, paint it of a sad, grayish, and subdued tone; such, indeed, as it shines during the sickly hours of a winter's day in the frozen regions of the North. Berghem was of a different temperament, and the bias of his mind tinctures the productions of his brush. To him the sombre hue of a cloudy sky had no fascination;

the forest glade, or the lonely glen, were not in harmony with the innate joyousness of his expansive soul; sorrow was distasteful—pensiveness unknown to him. The landscape lighted by an unexpected gleam of sunshine was his delight. He wished to see nature as smiling as his own genius, and as peaceful as his own bosom. Not one, perhaps, of the painters of his time had more masters than Berghem; not one had so little need of any.

He received his first instructions in art from his father, who was a humble painter of fish, desserts, and confectionery. The school was an unpromising and contracted one for an artist who was destined one day to arrive at an artistic and comprehensive knowledge of the whole of nature. But in his father's *atelier* Berghem gained only a smattering of the rudiments of his art. Through the different masters under whom he afterwards studied, he made acquaintance with those portions of



NICHOLAS BERGHEM. FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF.

the landscape in each of which he was hereafter to serve as a model to others. Van Goyen instructed him in the secrets of sea pieces, catechised him in the practical knowledge of seamanship, necessary to enable him to describe faithfully the different ropes and sails of a vessel under weigh, and taught him how to paint the sea,

"Calm or high, in main or bay."

From Peter Gredder, who was an excellent historical and portrait painter, he learnt how to group figures together, and how to vary the expression of the faces. His knowledge of landscape painting he gained from Nicholas Moyaert and John Willis; and his facility in painting barges, wharves crowded with merchandise, with Turkey goods and Eastern products, he derived from his uncle, John Baptiste Weenix.



Biographers give no reliable information of the real name of Berghem, or of how he happened to adopt the one under which he became so famous. Descamps declares that Berghem's surname was Van Huerlem, and his Christian name Nicholas. Karel de Moor thus accounts for the change. The young artist, who had offended his father, was flying from the punishment that awaited him to the protection of his master, Van Goyen. The enraged parent followed in hot pursuit, but the master, who was very fond of his young pupil, interposed,

and whispered to the other pupils, "Berg-hem, Berg-hem," which, being interpreted, means "Hide him—hide him." To this circumstance he owes the name of Berghem.

Berghem was born at Harlem (the birthplace of so many illustrious men) in 1624, and was contemporary with most of the great landscape painters of the Dutch school. Jacob Ruysdael, John Both, Everdingen, Weenix, and Wouvermans flourished about the same time as Berghem. He was on terms of intimacy and even friendship with them, for Berghem was a man of pleasing address, mild, lively, devoted to his art, and illustrating on his canvas the habitual gaiety of his disposition. Like most of his *confrères*, he married early the daughter of a master under whom he was studying, of the name of Willis. He seems to have been henpecked by his wife, who has the reputation of having been self-willed, imperious, and miserly. She kept her husband hard at work that she might board the proceeds of his labour. At her instigation he painted innumerable pieces upon the same



TRAVELLERS CONVERSING. FROM A PAINTING BY BERGHEM.

subjects, for which she found a ready market. One of the greatest proofs we have of his talent is the ever fresh and varying interest with which he contrived to invest paintings so similar in kind. The great charm of these productions consists in the management of the *chiaro-oscuro*, in the contrast of the colours, in the spirit, grace, ease, fertility of invention, and richness of imagery with which he illustrated the monotonous life of a shepherd and his flock. He had no domestic drama to adjust, no catastrophe to contrive, no startling incident to introduce, save a sudden ray of sunshine. The sick or wounded lamb the shepherd or his wife are carrying in their arms—the horned cattle are traversing the ford to revel in the juicy clover of a richer pasture-ground. Again, we see the same herd watering, tended by a knitter. The spot here represented is strikingly characteristic of the style of the painter. In a narrow place, inclosed by the ruins of some Roman structure, or in the shade of the rocks which hang beetling above it, lies this bed of transparent water, of which the sight alone is sufficient to refresh the weary and languid cattle. The scene changes, and at the decline of day, when the light mists of an autumn evening shroud the distant perspective of the darkening horizon, we see in the foreground two girls milking goats, and beside them a pail filled with the produce of the cow,

who stands a motionless spectator of the scene. Sheep and rams are scattered here and there, languid and listless. The shepherd, like his sheep, is stretched upon the grass, and is waiting in inaction the moment for returning to the farm. Everything proves that *that* moment is not far distant. The symptoms of fatigue in all the animated objects in the piece show how grateful will be the rest they are anticipating. If any distant figure disturbs for a moment the motionless quiet of the scene, it is but that of a villager driving home his wearied ass. In another hour the place will be deserted, and the landscape will have passed from the languor of evening to the silence of night.

"TRAVELLERS CONVERSING."

In this picture the graceful disposition of objects charms the eye. It is free from all stiffness, all harshness, or precision. The true artist enters into the very spirit of nature; but the greater the apparent ease the greater (generally speaking) has been the study that has effected it.

"All nature is but art unknown to thee;  
All art direction that thou canst not see;  
Confusion, harmony not understood,  
All partial evil universal good."

How fraught with life are these "Travellers," both biped and quadruped! The cattle in the distant valley are as life-like as those in the immediate foreground. Berghem's pictures must ever be great favourites in England, and in all pastoral countries. His pencil describes with a poet's warmth the beauties of nature, animate and inanimate. He was inspired in his *chef-d'œuvre* with a feeling akin to that which suggested the following lines to our own poet:—

"Now the golden morn aloft  
Waves her dew-bespangled wing;  
With vermeil cheek and whisper soft  
She woos the tardy spring;—  
Till April starts and calls around  
The drooping fragrance from the ground,  
And lightly o'er the living scene  
Scatters his freshest, tenderest green.

"New-born flocks in rustic dance,  
Frisking, ply their feeble feet,  
Forgetful of their wintry trance,  
The birds his presence greet.  
But chief the sky-lark warbles high  
His trembling, thrilling ecstasy,  
And lessening from the dazzled sight,  
Melts into air and liquid light."

But admirable as was Berghem in rustic scenery, he never attained (although he attempted) high art in figures. Thus his "Rape of Europa" is by no means a classical picture. The nymph who could charm the God of Olympus, is represented by Berghem in the shape of a coarse, handsome Dutch peasant girl. That Berghem should have failed so signally in this picture, is the more remarkable, as in Rome he had frequent opportunities of studying the antique. But his visit to the Eternal City was not without effect. In Italy he learnt to divest himself of that impress of melancholy which clings to the Dutch school, and indeed pervades the works of almost all northern artists.

In a landscape entitled "Night," which Wischer has engraved, we see the difference between Berghem and the other masters of his own time and country. Most of his contemporaries would have represented nature asleep. Van der Neer, in similar scenes, has introduced a few fishermen's huts, a stagnant pool, or some sorry-looking thrushes. Berghem, on the contrary, gives life and action to his nocturnal landscape. With a boldness at once enterprising and successful, he invests with a wakeful energy all his figures, imparts activity to his horses, and even to the cattle in the pastures, and inspires the spectator of his piece with a feeling of restlessness which is quite at variance with the stereotyped representations of the silent reign of night.

Living in retirement at his country seat of Benthem, this pastoral landscape painter enjoyed as

much happiness as ever falls to the lot of man. He was wealthy without being worldly-minded, for he had discovered a secret more precious than that philosopher's stone for which the alchemists of his time were seeking in vain. "Constant occupation," said he, "is the most valuable of all earthly possessions, for it enables us to dispense with riches." Happiness, as he interpreted the *veraxa questio*, consisted for him in the contemplation of nature, and, probably without knowing it himself, his definition of our "being's end and aim" was almost identical with that of the great peripatetic philosopher. From the windows of his *atelier* he glanced over the smiling pasture grounds which surrounded on all sides his rural mansion. He watched with the eye of a painter herds of cows traversing the meadows intersected by numerous canals, or caught glimpses of them passing by the interstices of the leafy trees, as they instinctively sought the spot where the milk-maid was waiting for them. Every transient view inspired the idea of some pastoral landscape, which was to become a subject of competition among the amateurs who hastened from all parts to bid for his paintings.

This inspired painter—this true philosopher—this virtuous and benevolent man—died long before the term which the Psalmist has allotted to man. He departed this life, according to Hagedorn, some time during the course of 1683, in the fifty-ninth year of his age.

#### "RURAL EMPLOYMENT."

The tone of this piece is very refreshing to the eye and very cheering to the mind. It transports one at once to the genuine country.

There is nothing suburban in this scene;—wild, fresh, open, we fancy we can almost feel the breeze that is busy with the bushes of the hedge-row, and we seem to hear the milk stream into the pail.

There is something gnome-like in the blighted tree, that looks, amid so fair a scene, like one great sorrow in a young heart.

We almost seem to tread on the soft verdure of the old pasture where the black-nosed buck is lying so luxuriously. There is a wild activity and spirit in the young she-goat which a very pretty country girl is milking.

"Thine, Thyraïs, this twin-bearing goat shall be,  
That fills two milk pails thrice a day for me."

This animated, horned capricorn, is well contrasted with the meek and patient stillness of the long-eared son of toil.

No one understood contrast and comparison better than Berghem; and the attitude of the dog, watchful in his repose, is in excellent contradistinction to the jaunty nonchalance of the goat, and the stupid endurance of the dull old ass.

There is great reality, and, therefore, great merit in the sky, and much character and expression in the dwarf hills, that blend with the middle distance. The foreground, dark and boldly touched in, is very effective, and the picture is a gem of rustic truth and beauty.

Berghem had not Paul Potter's *naïveté*, but he had more versatility than that great master, and his genius was at once more intellectual and more affluent.

The interest he excites is not a painful one. His tendency is to cheer and to soothe the mind.

Some connoisseurs accuse him of giving the reins to his imagination in depicting the animal world—in short, of sacrificing the real to the ideal—in doing which he, of course, was obliged to resign something of that honest, simple truthfulness which one expects and loves to find in pictures of rustic life.

We cannot deny that Berghem's animals are not all of the low Dutch breed. Here and there his donkeys are endowed with something of character and intelligence; and why not? Where is the ass who is not more sensible than he looks? And as to mules, they at least have one attribute of the higher and more intellectual world—vanity. The vanity of the mule is proverbial.

La Fontaine in his fables, and Berghem in his paintings, at the same epoch, represent the mule tossing its head in its pride and pomp, and with each toss shaking and ringing its silver bells.

If the word picturesque had not been in use, one must have coined it to characterise the genius of

Berghem. Every picture we have ever seen of this great master's, whether Italian in its sublime beauty, or Flemish in its flat and fertile simplicity, pleases, by the means of that delightful contrast, of which Hagedorn speaks so eloquently, and which is, to our minds, the most scientific of symmetries.

Berghem carefully avoids (possibly by an instinct of good taste) all parallels, long drawn lines, and all repetition of one contour. If a flock of sheep are crossing a stream (as, for instance, in that exqui-



RURAL EMPLOYMENT. FROM A PAINTING BY BERGHEM.

site little "Ford" exhibited at the Louvre), the long and monotonous succession of woolly hand-quarters is cleverly broken in upon by a shepherd with his crook, or by the winding route taken by two or three cows on the opposite bank. A country girl on horseback often gives a graceful, pyramidal form to the *tout ensemble* of a group of figures; while, in the distance, the rugged rocks, or undulating hills, will vary—and, in a manner, counterpoise—the composition of the picture; and the eye of the spectator the while, though satisfied and delighted, is quite unable to fathom the mystery, or discover the secret of a disorder which yet tends so much to the beauty and harmony of the whole piece.



"THE ANCIENT PORT OF GENOA."

This picture is as great a triumph of Berghem's genius in his classic, as "Rural Employment" is in his simple style. "The Port of Genoa" is considered by many very learned connoisseurs to settle the long-disputed point, and the much mooted question, as to whether Berghem had, or had not,

ANCIENT PORT OF GENOA. FROM A PAINTING BY BERGHEM.



visited Italy, and studied from life the beauties of the soft, inspiring Ansonia. "The Port of Genoa" is eminent for its local colouring. It is full of light (Italian light), southern animation, and the soft, half languid stir of a seaport in Italy. The sky is an Italian sky; the figures (those of the women especially) have a classic beauty of form—grace lurks in every fold of the drapery that veils, but does not shroud, the statuesque figures of the daughters of "Genoa the Proud." As we study this exquisite

picture—so rich, and yet so artistic, in its composition—we feel certain that Berghem had often gazed on the sweet southern sky that smiles upon this lively scene, and is mirrored in the blue depths of that gulf—fit mirror for “Genoa *la Superba*.” Berghem is very fond of goats in his foregrounds; and certainly the horns and wild shaggy coats of these somewhat weird and picturesque creatures give a great life to any scene; but particularly effective are they in this view of “The Port of Genoa.” It is very characteristic of the south, and of the softening effect of climate on man and beast, to see these creatures, by nature so wild and shy, and associated in our minds with such rugged crags and steep hills, lying in groups on the quay, domesticated with the idlers lounging on the steps, and enjoying, like them, the *dolce far niente* of Italian life.

There is something very delicate, and yet effective, in the introduction of the vessels, which we can fancy richly freighted with Genoa velvets and other costly merchandise.

One of those happy contrasts, which we have before noticed as almost peculiar to Berghem, is seen in the stillness of a noble statue, which rises like a pyramid, and stands unmoved where all else is movement. It has a powerful effect—that, as we said before, of judicious contrast. Fleecy clouds are careering along the azure sky—the warm breeze of Italy is flapping and filling the sails—the haughty beauty is coquetting (beneath an antique parasol, held by an attendant) with a gorgeous cavalier—the water is trickling from the fountain, which forms the pedestal of the warrior statue—all the figures are conversing with Genoese animation—the dogs are straining their necks and barking—the boats are gliding on the freshening waters of the bay; and, in the midst of all this movement and bustle, the great master of contrast and high priest of comparison planted the statue of a warrior, who seems to look down on all the life beneath him as if in scorn.

After studying this great masterpiece, we cannot believe the assertion of his biographer, Descamps, that Berghem had never quitted Holland. How could one who had gazed on nothing more inspiring than the marshes and sands that border the Zuyder Zee, have acquired a style so classic and so sublime? It could not have been done by the help of his own imagination and the study of a few engravings. How could he have conceived such noble buildings as those with which he enriches his compositions? or have imagined those depths so full of light and splendour—those noble ruins, so sublime in their decay—those azure mountains, which close in all his scenes, and are, indeed, of those whose

“Distance lends enchantment to the view”?

Ah! it could not have been in the environs of Harlem—so flat, so dreary, so desolate!—that Berghem could have conjured up terraces dressed with rich verdure; nor would he, among those marshes, have clothed his Dutch boors with sheepskins, or covered their thick heads with the hat peculiar to the Roman peasant! Berghem's pictures are the best refutation of Descamps' assertion; and to feel certain that he had dwelt in Italy, and studied his art there, we do not require the additional evidence which is yet furnished by the indisputable fact, that many of his masterpieces are painted on Italian canvas.

While his wife fancied he was fast asleep, he was occupied in studying the canopy of heaven—of tracing the fleecy clouds, and in turning even darkness to profit.

Berghem did not think it necessary to give an exact account to his wife of all he received for his pictures. Had he done so, she would have thwarted him in one of the objects of his life. So great was his desire to possess rare and beautiful prints, that, when his own resources failed, he borrowed money from his pupils, who were much attached to him, and thus he was enabled to gratify his ruling passion. He contrived to make an excellent collection; and he had in his possession a proof-print of the “Massacre of the Innocents” (taken from Raphael, and engraved by Marc Antoine), for which he had given sixty florins. Much as we respect economy, we cannot sympathise with a wife who could grudge her husband the indulgence of a legitimate inclination, and compel a great genius to have recourse to the littleness of deceit. What would have been the good of saving sixty florins, and disappointing such an artist as Berghem? Why, one of his pictures sold for 7,100 florins, and another for 17,000 francs. Surely he had a right to spend a little of his own, and to spend it exactly as he chose.

However peculiar may be the style of Berghem, it requires the eye of a connoisseur to distinguish his productions from those of painters whose style he sometimes adopted. His “Surprise of the Caval-

cade" might, by an inattentive observer, be attributed to Philippe Wouvermans; but on a nearer inspection the playful action of the figures, and the brilliancy of the aerial perspective, bespeak the practised hand of Berghem. These characteristics of the piece identify the artist.

### HIS MERITS.

His pastoral pieces, which are, in fact, the Idyls in painting of the Dutch *répertoire*, have conferred upon him the title of the "Theocritus of the Netherlands;" and, indeed, the Harlem painter and the Greek poet equally suggest the scene which has been so graphically described by the latter.

"How delightful is the lowing of the kine to the ear of the shepherd, as he languidly reposes on the margin of the crystal lake. The acorn is the glory of the oak, the apple of the orchard, and sheep are the delight of the shepherd."

## DAVID TENIERS.



DAVID TENIERS was the most productive of all the prolific painters of his country. "To find place for all my pictures," said he, one day to a friend, "I should require a gallery six miles long." Six miles of canvas! Such a space might almost suffice for the reproduction in oils of the whole Flemish nation. And indeed if the whole nation has not been individually, it has been typically reproduced by Teniers. We recognise it under every phase — drinking — dicing — dancing — smoking. But his ideas are always borrowed from plebeian never from patrician life. From the cabaret and the kermesse he derives his inspiration; and the fiddler, the tippler, and the smoker are the figures which people his canvas. But low, and even revolting, as are sometimes the objects he has chosen to represent, his genius has shed a halo around them, which renders them picturesque and even interesting. To those who know how refined were the manners, witty and agreeable the conversation, and illustrious the fame of this great painter, the subjects he has immortalised are quite an enigma.

Teniers lived like a prince. His castellated mansion, situate between Antwerp and Malines, which was known by the name of the *Château de trois Tours*, was a dwelling of high pretensions. Not only was it surmounted by three towers, but it was surrounded by a moat, over the water of which skimmed gracefully along the snowy forms of swan and cygnet. It was in truth a princely dwelling, and was to its possessor a source of pleasing pride. He has represented it more than twenty times in his pictures; displaying sometimes a front view, sometimes its profile—now placing it in the foreground, now in the distance—in short, under every possible aspect, without forgetting even a weathercock. There he led a life of elegance and luxury, at least if one may judge by one of his pictures, which represents him in the midst of his family, dressed in a rich satin doublet and embroidered ruff, the majestic perruque of those days, and the boots only worn by cavaliers. His mustaches are curled up in the pink of the fashion of that era; he has a bass viol between his legs, and is accompanying his son, who, standing behind him with his mouth open, is singing, no doubt, some of the fashionable airs of the time. Mrs. Teniers, very beautiful and blooming for a Fleming, holds a music book, and is dressed in Mechlin lace; a page is about to pour out some choice beverage; a monkey perched on the furniture, and the major-domo (or butler) standing like a piece of still life at the door of the parlour, listen to the concert, and seem enchanted with it.

Such was the home and home-life of Teniers. To this luxurious abode, and drawn thither by the



DAVID TENIERS. FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF.



painter's fame, and kept there by his friendly hospitality, came the most distinguished noblemen of that time and place, those whose names are—

“Stars for ever shining in the firmament of Time.”

Don John of Austria, Governor of the Low Countries, was of the number, he who had, alas, induced the daughter of Ribera, the Spanish painter, to elope from Naples with him, thereby breaking her old father's heart. Don John endeavoured (under Teniers' direction) to paint those sturdy Flemish boors who having often resisted the power of his sword, were equally beyond that of his pencil.

Archduke Leopold, who had had the honour of setting the fashion among the great of courting Teniers, saw his example followed by the Bishop of Ghent, and by all the nobility who patronised the arts.

Christina of Sweden, who had invited Descartes to her court, wished herself to be among the

courtiers of David Teniers, and sent him her portrait appended to a gold chain. Even Philip IV., the friend of Velasquez, had in the Escorial palace a gallery constructed to contain Teniers' "Village Hops" (*hermesses*). So that although he had lost his Flemish subjects in substance, he might still retain them on canvas.

Thus Teniers lived a lordly life. Princes were his pupils, kings his courtiers, and yet, strange to say, he painted nothing but peasants; his success was solely owing to the lower orders.

But if this taste for the scenes representing the home-life in rude boors is strange in a painter who was so choice in the fashion of a ruff, it is more surprising still among his royal and noble patrons. All those awkward dancers, those inveterate smokers, those card-players of Teniers', bear a very strong



A FLEMISH "KERMESSE." FROM A PAINTING BY DAVID TENIERS.

resemblance to that mob of the Seven Provinces which fought so boldly against Spain,—mob from the woods, the marshes, and the towns, as it was the fashion to call them then.

The joy that makes them hold their glasses so high when they drink, and kick up their clumsy feet so outrageously when they dance, was not solely owing to their third pot of beer. No, it was the sense of victory. And Teniers, the younger, in the midst of this mob, receiving the homage and admiration of the sovereigns of Europe, was, in some degree, the William of Orange of the kingdom of art. Both Teniers and William III. owed their empire to the mob.

David Teniers was born in 1610. His father, David Teniers, the elder, was at that time already an established artist—a friend of Elzheimer, and, greater distinction still, a friend of Rubens.

The first toy of the younger Teniers was a paint-brush, and, like his great French contemporary, Blaise Pascal, he adorned the walls of his paternal abode with lines indicative of future greatness. His native town was Antwerp, birthplace of Rubens, Vandyck, Jordaens, Gaspar de Crazer, and

Porbus. Great laboratory, whence issued those rich and brilliant colours, those liquid gems, which, durable as they were dazzling, enchanted not only those who gazed on them in their pristine freshness, but the amateurs of fine colouring through all after time.

David Teniers, the younger, was (what very few of the sons of great men are) much more eminent than his father. The Teniers family was very far from being rich or noble at the commencement of the seventeenth century. Old Teniers, who was also a painter of boors, led much the same life as his models did. There are traditions of his going to market with his pictures (himself and his son on a donkey). How many Flemish painters have devoted all the energies of their great genius to the grotesque school of art !

An irresistible spirit of heart-felt jollity pervades and distinguishes all the *tableaux* of the younger Teniers. He is, throughout, the laughing philosopher, the keen and sarcastic observer, a painter full of humour, and who, in the most trifling of his pot-house scenes, has always a purpose, while generally throughout that purpose runs a vein of playful irony.

Teniers engraved himself many of his own pieces in aquafortis, and he has left several drawings in lead pencil, which, like all his paintings, display great skill and genius.

In every country in which the art of painting is appreciated the productions of Teniers are held in high estimation.

In the Belvedere, at Vienna, no less than nineteen of the *chefs-d'œuvre* of this great master are collected in the room No. 6. The most remarkable are, "A Peasant's Wedding," dated 1648, and signed ; "Abraham and Isaac on the Mount," "A Young Maid Cleaning her Kitchen Utensils," "The Sausage Maker," "A Village Festival," a large canvas representing the gallery of pictures belonging to the Archduke Leopold William. There are, moreover, fifty pictures from Italian masters copied by Teniers ; "Peasants drawing the Cross-bow," A "Kermesse," "The Festival of the Archers of the Cross-bow," celebrated every year at Brussels. In the mass of people who throng "La Place des Sablons," we distinguish the likenesses of Teniers and his family. This piece is signed, and bears date 1652. The Museum of the Louvre contains fourteen pictures by Teniers, all of them of first-rate excellence. The most celebrated are, "The Temptation of St. Anthony," and "The Spendthrift," of which we have given engravings ; "Works of Charity," "A Village Wedding," "The Interior of a Tavern," &c. &c.

In the Museum at Madrid there are no less than sixty masterpieces by Teniers. We cannot undertake to enumerate them exactly ; but it will gratify connoisseurs to learn the names of those which are remarkable for their finish, or the nature of the subject. First and foremost, stands the piece known by the title of "The Gallery of Pictures for the inspection of Gentlemen." The circumstances which led to the execution of this piece are as follows : The Archduke Albert, Governor of the Low Countries, had commissioned Teniers to furnish for him a gallery of paintings worthy of a prince. When he had executed the order to the satisfaction of his patron, it occurred to Teniers that it would be worth while to perpetuate the memory of the event by means of a painting. In this piece we see the Archduke, surrounded by a brilliant staff of noblemen, entering the gallery, in which Teniers appears presenting to his Highness the drawings which are spread over the table. All along the walls, from the top to the bottom, are hung the pictures which he had chosen, faithfully copied and microscopically reduced in size, but in which one easily recognises the touch of the great master.

The Dresden Gallery contains twenty-five pictures by David Teniers. Among them are : "The Backgammon Players," "Flemish Fair," "Peasants Playing at Cards," "An Old Woman, and Apparitions," "St. Peter Delivered from Prison," "Guardroom," two Landscapes, "A Chemist," "Temptation of St. Anthony," "Topers Throwing Dice," "Dance of Peasants," another "Temptation of St. Anthony," "An Old Dentist," "Landscape, with Mountains." In one of the two "Temptations of St. Anthony" the cockatrice egg, which Teniers was so fond of introducing, does not appear—the only time Teniers can be accused of an omission of the kind.

At the "Hermitage," St. Petersburg, among the forty-seven pictures which represent Teniers, we find specimens of each of his styles ;—landscapes, pot-houses, taverns, village fairs, guardrooms, a "Temptation of St. Antony," interiors, grotesque scenes, musicians, alchymists, fishermen, drunkards, smokers, and monkeys. Among the little cabinet pictures which Teniers would complete in an evening, and which have retained the name of "after-dinner pieces," we meet with some striking works ;—first,

two great "Village Festivals," from the collection of Voyer d'Argenson; a very beautiful "Guard-room;" "The Interior of a Kitchen," full of game, fish, and vegetables; also "The View of his House," in the village of Perck, between Antwerp and Malines. But Malmaison has supplied the Hermitage with a work, not *à la Teniers*, though an invaluable one. It is a great picture, painted in 1643 for the Brotherhood of the Cross-bow, and called "The Arquebusiers of Antwerp." It contains no less than forty-five little figures, eight or ten inches in height. The arrangement of this crowd in perspective, and the carrying out of all the details, are truly marvellous. Descamps rightly calls it Teniers' best picture. Nothing more important or more perfect ever emanated from the pencil of this prolific master.

#### "A FLEMISH KERMESE."

Expression and touch are the two points in which David Teniers excels his father and all the painters of the same school. In these characteristics, our own Wilkie approaches nearer to him than any other painter of any time or country. "Show me but a pipe," said Greuze, "and I will tell you whether it belongs or not to one of Teniers' figures." If this be not an exaggeration, and we see no reason for thinking that a rival artist would have enhanced his merits, what distinctive perception, what minuteness of observation must there not have been in David Teniers? Nothing, indeed, escaped his penetrating eye. His grasp of mind was so great that he mastered the minutest details of every subject upon which he was engaged, and so characteristic was his delineation of it that his pieces could be recognised even by a pipe! Yes, the domestic painter of the age, so skilled in seizing the identity of his subjects, in mimicking their little airs and ways, their gait, their whole manner, had himself such peculiarities of style and handling, that his work can never be confounded with that of any one else. Thief and monopoliser, as he undoubtedly was, of everything good that he could glean from any other master, with a kind of Protean versatility in the art of painting; rummaging in every *atelier*, and assuming at different times the brush of the different great masters—Dutch, Spanish, Italian, and Flemish by turns—he had nevertheless such individuality that no copyist, however clever, could either imitate a wig, design a bench, or touch off the light on the bowl of a pipe without being immediately detected in his theft. The connoisseur exclaims at once, "This is not the work of Teniers. I cannot recognise his light touch, so lively, so decided."

In the history of the paintings of all modern schools, from the earliest period of their existence, there is no example of so original a copyist, of an imitator so inimitable. The scenes of which this "Kermesse" is a type, are those in which the Flemish painters have the most excelled. Both the Van Ostades, Brauwer, Bega, and a long line of followers have achieved immortality by similar subjects, and with almost the identical figures which Teniers has here introduced. Yet such is the distinctive genius of this painter that we immediately recognise the tippler, the smoker, and the gambler, *à la Teniers*, from that of any other master. It is the spirit of animal enjoyment, that seems to animate all the actors in this scene, which constitutes the peculiar charm of Teniers. This identical "Kermesse" would have been seen through a different medium by each of the three—Teniers, Ostade, and Brauwer. Each would give a different colouring to the picture and see in the same assemblage different faces; or perhaps it would be more correct to say, the same faces under different aspects. Brauwer would have waited till the tipplers had become quarrelsome in their cups, and would have sketched them hurling tankards, stools, brushes, or whatever they could lay their hand on, at each others' heads. The attention of Van Ostade would, on the contrary, have been arrested by some simple incident, by the placid quietude of a smoker, and his silent self-abstraction. He reproduces on his canvas, with admirable truthfulness, his peaceable, pensive, and phlegmatic expression, giving him at the same time all his characteristic ugliness. But Teniers would have seized at once the jovial side of the picture, and have given the broad and merry grin, extending from ear to ear, of the rude, untutored peasant.

" Oft did the forest to their sickle yield,  
 Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke.  
 How jocund did they drive their teams a-field—  
 How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke.



THE TEMPTATION OF ST. ANTHONY. FROM A PAINTING BY DAVID TENIERS.

" But knowledge to their eyes her ample page,  
 Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll ;  
 Chill penury repressed their noble rage,  
 And froze the genial current of the soul."

But uninviting and uninspiring as seem these rough sons of the soil, Teniers knew how to elicit from them "that touch of nature which makes the whole world kin." Mine hostess mingles in the





THE JEALOUS WIFE. FROM A PAINTING BY DAVID TENIERS

dance, cracks her joke, and allows even her waist to be taken by storm in the whirling dance, while her husband, looking to the main chance, scores upon the door the beer that he is drawing.

One of Teniers' celebrated masterpieces represents a festival in honour of "The Village Bride." The father is engaged in the hospitable task of supplying his guests with slices of ham. The bridegroom, whose perceptive qualities are very imperfectly developed, is grinning unconsciously, while an enterprising rival is stealing a kiss from the buxom and blooming bride. There is a party of five or six peasants at the wedding. One is honouring with his glass the health which another is proposing. The toast and jest go round; and rings

"The loud laugh that speaks the vacant mind."

And the guests are drinking as though the future happiness of the married couple depended on the depth of their potations. They are all jolly toppers, and Teniers, whose penetration nothing ever escapes, has seized on what is most characteristic in each. The more grotesque the expression, the more he delights in reproducing it in all its native singularity. In this particular instance he greatly resemblances our own Hogarth, though he is less caustic and far more philanthropic. This power of catching the expression of the face, compensates in Teniers for much that is coarse and revolting, though too true to nature in the execution of his figures. But in Teniers, everything is in keeping. The manners of the waiter at the tavern are quite different from those of the country clown. The farmer is cast in a different mould from the citizen, and the village beadle has a peculiar way of lighting his pipe—of holding his cards—of ladling out his punch, and of drinking it.

How soon, in any old collection of engravings, do we discover a Teniers by its merits; and in the series called "Village Amusements," how admirable is the expression of the faces of the old ball players. A spirit of good-humoured satire pervades the whole succession of prints. So absorbed in the interest of the game are these tennis players, that no king who has his crown at stake—no lover who is on the point of losing the mistress he adores—no miser who is hazarding all the gold he worships on the cast of the dice, has ever shown more intense anxiety about the issue than that veteran gamester at the moment he tosses the ball he has so long held in suspense. When once the ball has quitted his hand, he refuses to listen to a single syllable, for he declares that even a hostile word might cause it to swerve or diminish its momentum. For himself, he watches it with earnest eye, and follows it with his gestures, praises and scolds it by turns, until he sees it arrive safely at its destination, after it has narrowly escaped collision with a stone, and borne the crossfire of a hundred hostile eyes.

#### "THE TEMPTATION OF ST. ANTHONY."

The subjects in which Teniers succeeded the best were gipsies at the races or the fair, telling the fortunes of their dupes, and laughing the while at the credulity of their listeners—alchemists poring over their alembics, and wasting their lives in a vain and ridiculous search—monkeys, dressed like men of fashion, with their sword at their side, and with all the airs of people of quality—witches boiling their caldrons in the moonlight. Such are the favourite subjects of Teniers; such the scenes in which his humorous fancy is the most conspicuous. But, though these were the comedies of his art, he was also devoted to a certain species of religious subjects, if such a scene as "The Temptation of St. Anthony" can be dignified with this appellation. What a favourable opportunity this absurd legend offered for the exercise of his humorous fancy. Around the self-sacrificing anchorite, wrapt in an ecstasy of devotion, the painter has let loose the most grotesque and monstrous anomalies—horned and cloven-footed nightmares, animal shapes indeed, so ridiculous and unnatural, that it is impossible to look at them without laughing. These nondescript forms, fresh from the regions of darkness, and well versed in all the artifices of the King of Terrors, are using every means to divert the thoughts and interrupt the orisons of the devotee, who, kneeling before the altar he has roughly carved for himself, joins his withered hands in often-repeated paternosters, or fixes his eyes in mute despair upon the books which can alone sustain and protect him. Around him spring, mushroom-like, into being, creatures startling in form and formidable in number. They are crowding the cell of the saint, they

scale the rock and flit over the ceiling, while those who cannot gain admittance are peering through the interstices, or grinning with fiendish malice at the entrance of the cave. Near the sacred volume owls, with spectacles on nose, are feigned to read the inspired writings, with no less attention than the Christian martyr. Bats, pterodactyles, and animals who have no place in natural history, but who owe their existence and immortality to the prolific fancy of Teniers, are fixing their malignant gaze on the unhappy saint, or twitching at his cowl or his cassock to withdraw for one moment, one fatal moment, his eyes and his attention from the book which is at once his talisman and his antidote. Incredible as it may seem, in the midst of this apparently irresistible farce, the anchorite is unmoved. Satan himself might despair of a successful interruption, if Teniers has failed in the attempt.

There is something very remarkable about the touch of Teniers, and it is perhaps his touch which is his distinguishing characteristic. The fineness of his colouring, its pleasing transparency, and its silvery tone, might be sufficient to establish the line of demarcation between him and the other painters of the same school; but his handling is so free, light, and ready, that we recognise him by it as easily as the poet tells us the Queen of Love was known by her gait. Endowed by nature with unerring tact and most discriminating judgment, David Teniers knew how to accommodate his touch to the objects he was representing, in such a way as to give them an additional stamp of reality if his subject was still life, and the appearance of life itself, if his subjects were breathing, animated beings. His *touch* is therefore highly intellectual, and if it appears occasionally almost too decided or rather too resolute and free, it is always the result of deep reflection, and his brush is ever guided, not by the stereotyped rules of a dull routine, but by an exquisite appreciation of form, colour, and the true picturesque. He had wonderful skill in the management of tint and tone, and knew how to distinguish between the fine polish of the ivory flute and the coarse brightness of the greased platter, between the shining radiance of the burnished cuirass or well-scoured kitchen caldron and the glowing efflorescence of a peasant's nose. In this picture of "The Temptation of St. Anthony," we see that Teniers had another distinguishing characteristic: we mean his perspective. His eye was so correct that he knew how to make his objects advance or retire without employing any agency except a lighter or a deeper tint—a weaker or a stronger touch, calculated with such precision, that he was independent of those harsh lines, those abrupt transitions from light or shade of which a clever artist is little in need.

Judging of Teniers' genius and merit merely by Lebas' exquisite engravings of his masterpieces, which are thus robbed of the great charm of colouring and handling for which they were so remarkable, we still must come to the conclusion that he is unrivalled in his own style for humour and expression.

Of course there is much in this great master of the grotesque to shock the sybarite, and startle those who see no beauty where there is no poetry, no refinement. These epicures in art will sympathise with the disgust of Louis Quatorze (Louis the Superb).

It was not arm in arm with the queenly Athenais De Montespan, or hand in hand with the soft and delicate La Vallière, that scenes so coarsely characteristic of Flemish low life could be appreciated and enjoyed.

To judge of David Teniers one must transport oneself to Malines or Anvers, one must imbue oneself with the spirit and tastes of a Flemish Burgomaster—one must remember how *far in every sense* from the sublime and classic Parthenon dwelt the quaint and yet inspired genius of the Low Countries.

We must close the golden gates of the Temple of the Ideal, and with a good grace prepare to pass through the low door-way of the pot-house. We must accept for our Helicon the white beer of Flanders, and gather what poetry we can from the humble realities of life.

#### "THE JEALOUS WIFE."

It is a thousand pities that the subject of this picture should not have been more worthy of the genius that conceived and the talent that executed it.

We always grieve to see art enlisted in any cause but that of virtue,—and we regret that such powerful effects of light and shade, such careful drawing, and such animated, life-like expression, should

have been lavished on a scene which no one who has "kept the whiteness of his soul" can gaze at with pleasure, and which must bring a blush to the cheek of any lady who deserves the name.

*Honi soit qui mal y pense* is a favourite motto of ours ; but who *can* put any but an evil construction upon a picture which tells its own tale so well.

Who can mistake the expression of the old sinner, who might have sat for one of the elders watching Susannah, and who, with a flattering tongue and a tempting glass, is winning his way to the favour of a buxom Flemish maid, or frow (she looks more like the latter) ; while his lawful wife, no longer so young or so pretty as she has been, nor as her plump and blooming rival, but who has grown gray in the service of that sly and faithless old spouse, looks in on the pair, her hard features distorted by jealousy, her eyes on fire with rage, her lips compressed with envy of the honied words, the illicit caresses and the sparkling wine, and wroth at the thought of the work left undone and the time wasted ; and



THE SPENDTHRIFT. FROM A PAINTING BY DAVID TENIERS.

whose anguish, "hideous exceedingly," forms so strong a contrast to the wicked delight in the face of the old man, and the flattered vanity and sensual ecstasy with which the young woman contemplates the wine, sparkling and dancing in the quaint crystal glass.

Of course the object of the painter is to render the jealous wife an object of disgust and ridicule ; and certainly a more repulsive female face could not have been imagined.

But jealousy is only the lawful game of the satirist (whether painter, poet, or novelist) when it is unfounded. No one can look at the old innkeeper and the young maid of the inn (for such Teniers' biographers declare her to be) without feeling that the poor wife's jealousy is but too well founded.

Considering this, our sympathies are enlisted on the side of this Gorgon ; and we almost hope the storm we see brewing *will* descend heavily on the head of the hoary gallant, and effect the expulsion of that worst of maids—the maid who prefers her master to her mistress, and listens to the former when to do so is treason to the latter.

Some connoisseurs have asserted that it was merely for the sake of contrast in expression, and a strong effect of light and shade, that Teniers introduced that upper window and that distorted face of "The Jealous Wife."

That they have that effect is certain ; but the whole sentiment of the picture is too much in keeping with that of many others by the same master, to make it probable he had no other object. Even



RACCHANALIAN PHILOSOPHERS. FROM A PAINTING BY DAVID TENIERS.

were it so, we should not hold him excused. There is no effect of art worth securing at the cost of the smallest sacrifice of good feeling and good taste ; and generally the grandest results have been obtained when *they* have been allowed to reign suprema. However, in many of Teniers' home pieces there is much to amuse and little to offend. There are everywhere volumes of smoke ; but tobacco smoke, odious as it is in reality, is picturesque on canvas. And no scene of Flemish low life could be true to nature without the evidences of that soporific weed, at once the cause and the effect of that

dull phlegmatic nature for which the Low Country boor is proverbial. The pipe is in the mouth, the soiled cards in the hand of all Teniers' male peasants; while the golden and silvery brightness of the pots, kettles, and pans that adorn the humble walls, show how much better that sex that does not smoke and seldom drinks to excess, fulfils her destiny, performs her duties, and employs her time. Teniers did not resemble Molière merely in the fact that both enjoyed the title and sinecure of *valet de chambre* to royalty; he shared with him that racy, comic humour, that irresistible drollery, which seizes on the ludicrous element in everything, and bequeathes it, sparkling with wit and glowing with merriment, to all after time. Neither the author nor the artist are ever for one moment forsaken by that original and diffusive gaiety which animates alike the canvas of Teniers and the pages of Molière. About this gaiety there is nothing forced, artificial, or unreal; it is genuine humour, innate, inexhaustible, and irresistibly catching.

In that great "Kermesse," or "Village Fête," by Rubens, which is to be seen at the Louvre, there is passion, but there is no humour. Men are getting dead drunk without seeming to enjoy their liquor, and courting women with an *empressement* in which individual preference and love's better parts, affection and tenderness, seem to have no share.

#### "THE SPENDTHRIFT."

The original painting is in the Museum of the Louvre, and is considered to be almost invaluable. The subject is one that our own Hogarth has treated most successfully. The young prodigal is wasting his substance in riotous living; but he has no pitying parent who will see him from afar off, when he comes back to say, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son!" His companions are loose and disreputable characters, who will cling to him with the tenacity of burrs while he has anything to give, or anything that they can appropriate; but when they have stripped him of all he possesses—fame as well as fortune, they will leave him to perish in his nakedness. His riches are making to themselves wings:—

"Light they disperse, and with them go  
The summer friend, the flitting foe;  
By vain prosperity received,  
To her they vow their truth, and are believed."

With a mere verbal alteration, the inspired lines of the same poet are descriptive of the scene before us:—

"Alas! regardless of their doom,  
The silly victims play;  
No thought have they of ills to come,  
No care beyond to-day.  
Yet see how all around them wait,  
The ministers of human fate,  
And black misfortune's baleful train.  
Ah! show them where in ambush stand,  
To seize their prey, the murderous band;  
Ah! tell them they are men.  
These shall the fury passions tear  
The vultures of the mind;  
Disdainful anger, pallid fear,  
And shame, which skulks behind.  
Or pining love shall waste their youth,  
Or jealousy, with rankling tooth,  
That inly gnaws the secret heart,  
Grim visaged, comfortless despair,  
And sorrow's piercing dart.  
Far in the vale of years beneath,  
A grisly troop are seen,  
The painful family of death,  
More hideous than their queen."

This racks the joints, this fires the veins ;  
 Those in the deeper vitals rage.  
 Lo ! poverty to fill the band  
 That numbs the soul with icy hand,  
 And slow, consuming age."

The picture is painfully suggestive. How many must we all have known who, like "this prodigal spendthrift," whom the painter has so graphically represented at the first stage on the road to ruin, after having commenced the journey of life with every circumstance in their favour, so abused the gifts of God and man as to make them the occasion of their downfall. The moral of the piece is so simply, unostentatiously, and yet so effectually impressed, that we know of no production in this style in which any painter has so successfully followed that golden rule of Horace—*ars est celare artem*.

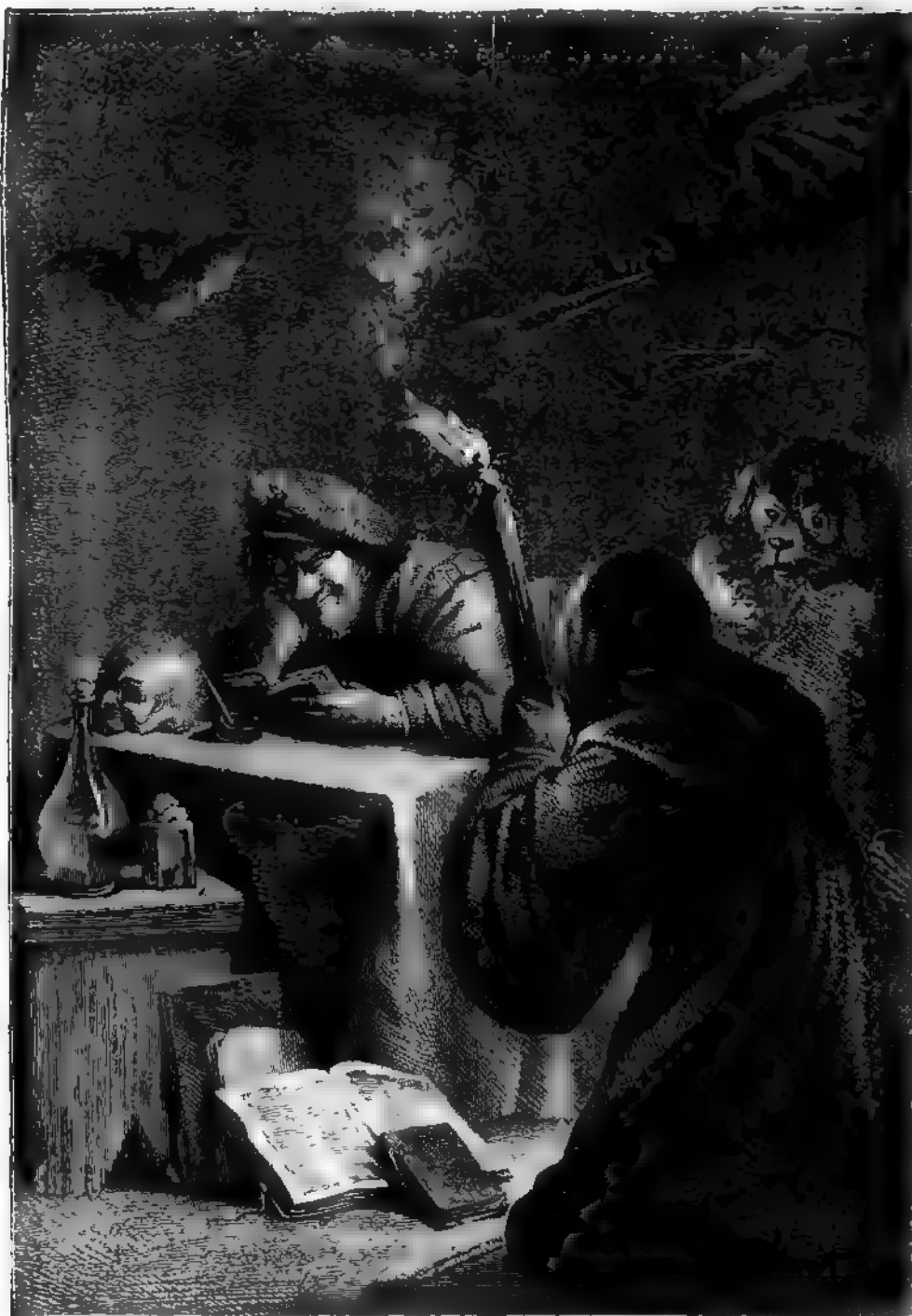
This prodigal son of the seventeenth century is dressed in the style of the gentlemen of the time. His silken locks, well cared for and golden, fall in clusters on his point-lace collar. In his hat he wears that distinctive mark of birth and fortune—the ostrich feather ; and his heels are armed with knightly spurs. His Spanish cloak, his jewel-mounted sword, and his richly embossed belt, are laid aside for the banquet. The festive board is spread *al fresco* at the entrance of the inn ; the sky is bright and clear ; the landscape laughing in the summer sunshine ; the servants wait around the table, which groans beneath the weight and number of the viands. In the foreground, two old-fashioned flasks of liquor reflect the golden light, and shine invitingly in the curiously wrought copper cooler. "The Spendthrift" is seated between two fair damsels, decked in silks and satins, smiling and lovely ; his hand clasps, with trembling emotion, that of his favourite *innamorata*. She seems to have a fresh and transparent complexion, a winning expression, a fair and rounded form ; all is, for the moment, *couleur de rose*—

"Youth at the prow, and pleasure at the helm."

But the scene, unlike most of Teniers' jovial pieces, is one of elegant luxury ; and not the less dangerous on account of the refined attractions of the fair but fatal Circes, whose syren flatteries are luring inexperienced youth to its destruction.

It is very unfortunate that there are so few circumstantial memoirs of the great painters of the Dutch and Flemish schools. No artist of any time or place has more worthily earned the appreciation in which he is held than Teniers. His handling is so perfect, the conception of his subjects is so original and striking, the attitudes of his figures are so natural, the expression of their faces so lifelike, and his touch, tone, and colouring so truly characteristic and unapproachable in their style, that it is disgraceful in his contemporaries not to have bequeathed to us more full and interesting details of the life of him who was at once the pride of his country and the ornament of his age. It is in vain that we search through the historical records of the time, or study the artistic volumes of contemporary amateurs. Scarcely can we find a line that contains any information concerning a painter who himself immortalised every subject he attempted. Even D'Argenville, in the memoir he has left us of the father of Teniers, hardly devotes six lines to the illustrious son. Félibien makes no mention of him even in that edition of his work which was published in 1706—little more than fifteen years after the death of Teniers. De Piles, who wrote so voluminously and so well about Rubens, could only relate a few unimportant particulars of the life of Teniers.

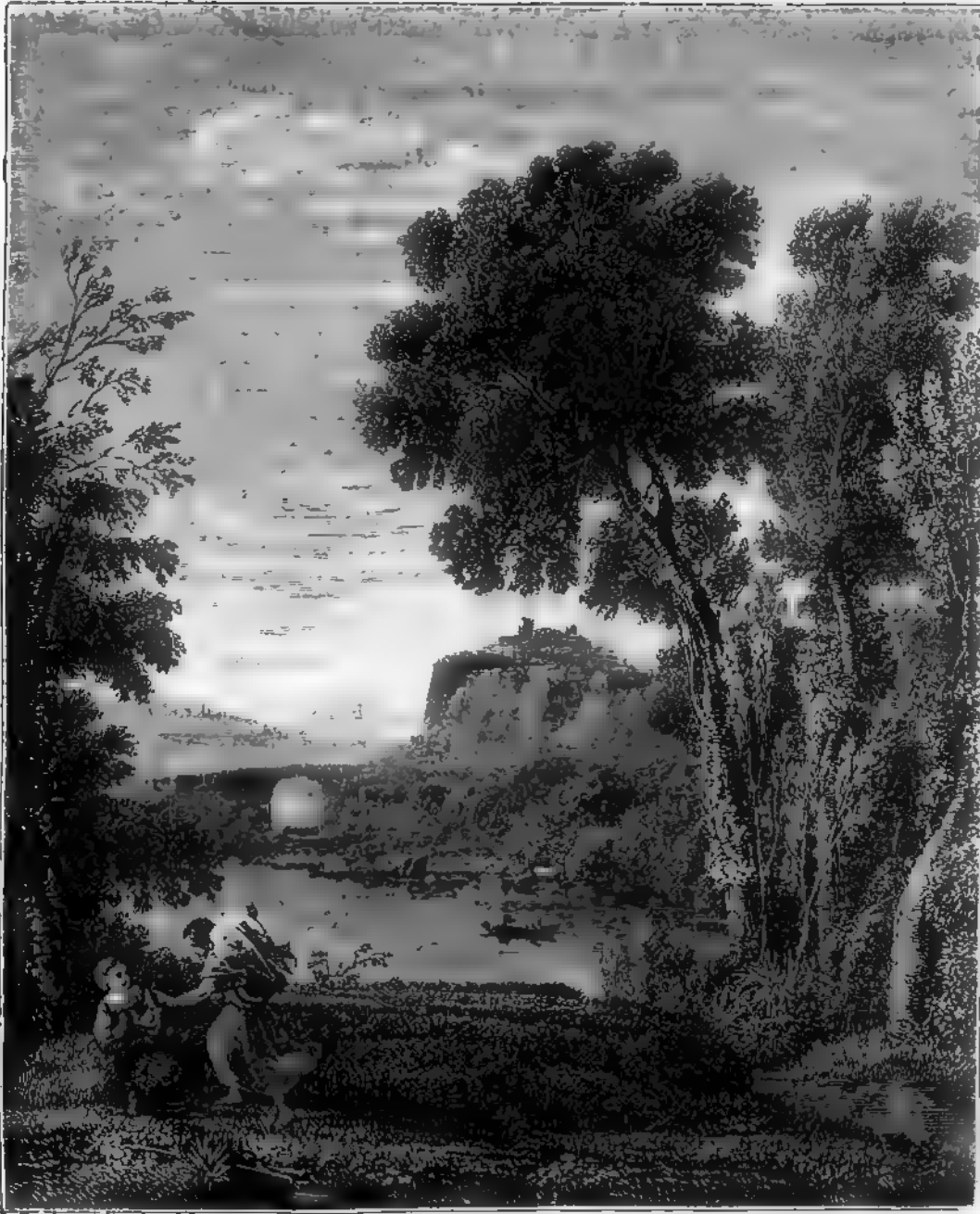
In his remarks upon some of the great masters, Taillasson has given us the following valuable description of our painter :—"Teniers," said he, "describes the moral as well as the physical characteristics of his peasants ; and, indeed, their impulses and passions, circumscribed by their limited experience, ought to have a different development in their expression to those of other men. In the pictures of Teniers we see these peasants arguing, discussing, haranguing. When he paints them playing at cards, with what accuracy and what warmth does he seize the peculiar excitement of this species of gamester. He draws a line of demarcation between the different classes of the inhabitants of the country, and from the mendicant to the lord of the manor all the various shades are well preserved. The tones of his colouring are truthful and rich, vigorous and silvery. The harmony of the whole, in his pieces, is always maintained without an apparent sacrifice of any part. In his interiors as well as in his *al fresco* scenes, the *chiaro-oscuro* is so naturally introduced, that the painter never seems to



DIABOLICAL READING. FROM A PAINTING BY DAVID TENIERS.

have thought about it at all. The genius of Teniers shines conspicuously in his rapid and lively touch, which seems to carry playfully along with it light, life, colour, and expression. His productions, which are the mirrors of truth, appear to have been but the work of an instant. We detect in them no servile imitation—no constraint. But everything seems to be the creation of his own mind.”





TOBIT AND THE ANGEL. FROM A PAINTING BY CLAUDE LORRAIN.

If literature has done but little in making the public appreciate Teniers at his proper value, oral tradition has effected in revenge what history has neglected. Of all the great masters whose *chefs-d'œuvre* are occasionally offered for sale, Teniers is the one who can still command the greatest prices from real connoisseurs. He is, moreover, the painter whom the *soi-disant* critics pretend to know more intimately than any other, because they have heard him constantly quoted, and have seen hundreds of imitations of his works by Abshoven, Ryckaert, and others.

Teniers was very successful in disposing of his pictures at a high price. An anecdote we have heard, which most probably suggested to La Fontaine his celebrated fable of the cat who pretends to be dead in order to catch the mice, proves that our ancestors of the seventeenth century were as cunning as ourselves. Teniers' pictures were in great request. As, however, we are able to state upon good authority that they already covered in length six miles of space, it is no wonder that the supply began to be in excess of the demand, great as it undoubtedly was. The expenses of his establishment were always on the increase, and when pictures began to hang on hand, the alarm at the "Three Towers" may be more easily imagined than expressed. To cover more canvas, work at all hours of the day and the night, sketch with a rapid and untiring pencil every peasant, male or female, dancing, dallying, or drinking, this would only serve to lower the price and glut the market. Rapid diseases require violent remedies, and Teniers saw there was nothing for it but to die. Death would make a thorough revolution in the state of public feeling. The idea was no sooner entertained than it was acted upon. The dismal report spreads far and wide. Teniers is dead. The hand of the inspired master is cold. The genius that delighted the world of connoisseurs is for ever extinct. Happy, thrice happy the picture fancier who has still the opportunity of procuring one of his immortal productions. A few may still be had at the "Three Towers." Amateurs vie with each other in their haste and anxiety to procure at any price the *tableaux* that are still unsold. They rush, they squeeze, they wrangle! Their gold they give freely, as the eager competition raises the price. Nevertheless, from his secret chamber, brush in hand, the dead-alive Teniers laughs in his sleeve at his dupes,—to their astonishment furnishes posthumous pieces without number. When the farce had been carried sufficiently far, the resurrection of Teniers takes place, to the great joy of the assembled company of picture fanciers, even those who have been the victims of his *ruse*. He is again among the quick, not among the dead.

After many years of married bliss, Teniers was bereaved of his wife, Ann Breughel, and compelled to sell the "Three Towers." This estate, which had become famous as the residence of the immortal painter, was purchased by John de Fresne, a privy councillor at the court of Brabant. Teniers, however, had the good luck to become once more an inmate of his old home, as the husband of the daughter of the new proprietor. The immortal painter of tavern pieces and of "kermesses," of monkeys in doublet and hose, of Temptations of St. Anthony, and of alchemists in search of the philosopher's stone, died at last in good earnest, in 1694, eighty-four years of age.

#### "BACCHANALIAN PHILOSOPHERS."

"Bambochades," or tavern scenes, which take their foreign name from Bamboche, a celebrated painter of the Van Ostade school, were also favourite subjects with Teniers. But Teniers, like our own Hogarth, supplies a moral even in his mirth. The expression of the face of the principal figure in the foreground is, if we rightly interpret the meaning of the painter, a warning to all drunkards. The fumes of the potent liquor which this toper is imbibing in such quantities, to the ruin of his health and the waste of his substance, have already unseated reason from her throne, and have thus lowered the *soi-disant* lord of the creation below the level of the beasts that perish. For, as the Colossus of literature justly remarks, the brute, obedient to his instinct, drinks only when he is thirsty, and as much as nature requires; while man abdicates from his high functions and the empire which reason alone confers, by continuing, out of mere wantonness, to tickle his palate long after his craving is satisfied. This "Interior" is one of Teniers' *chef-d'œuvre* in this style. The ugliness of the figures is quite grotesque, and proves how brutal in appearance debauchery can render "the human face divine."

#### "DIABOLICAL READING."

This picture is in the Bordeaux Museum. It is one of the best that Teniers ever produced. The effect is at once striking and original. The contrast between the light and shade is especially remarkable in a painter who was in the habit, as the celebrated critic Gersaint aptly remarks, of bringing *light* out of *light*. But although the piece has the title "Lecture Diabolique," or "Diabolical Reading,"

affixed to it, we have good reason for thinking that it is only a variation of the hackneyed subject of "St. Anthony." The old sinner who is seated at the saint's table is, if we may judge by the drunken expression of his face, some tippler from a neighbouring tavern, whose nose bespeaks frequent intercourse with the brandy bottle. He has taken advantage of the momentary absence of the real anchorite, to establish himself in his chair in this penitential cell, and surrounded on all sides by dragons, owls, and nondescript fowl of the infernal *répertoire*, hooded and winged, is laughing in his sleeve at these emissaries of the Evil One, to deceive whom he is personating the holy recluse, with the sacred volume open before him, and the customary skull at his side. He is, however, only deceiving himself, for these emissaries of Satan, figurative and metaphorical though they be, know well that every unreclaimed drunkard is their legitimate prey.

"The great secret of the success of Teniers," says M. Paillot de Montabert, in his clever treatise on painting, "consists in the universality of his knowledge, and in his intuitive perception of perspective. This perspective faculty formed part of his nature, and is observable not only in his figures and outlines, but in his tones, tints, and touch. In addition to this important secret of his success, Teniers was a great master of *chiaro-oscuro*, in the art of light and shadow combination, and was quite unrivalled in his manner of blending his tints. His effects are always clear and well defined. They are bright, airy, and original. They are, moreover, free from that mistiness which is the last resource of presumptuous ignorance; they have none of those deep shadows through which painters who are anxious to produce startling effects bring sudden scintillations of light. Teniers knew the value of the old precept, "*ars est celare artem*," and never revealed the secret of his success. At the first sight of his pictures we detect no artistic contrivances. Any painter, a casual observer would say, might, with a knowledge of aerial perspective, conceive, dispose, and illumine his conception as well as Teniers has done, so thoroughly natural is the system he pursues, but a deeper study of the piece shows how artistic is this appearance of simplicity—how studied are the causes of these effects—how deep are his calculations, and how varied is his skill. Always secure of the result of his experiments, well versed in the application of the principle of the unity of light and shade, and familiar with the effect of contrasts, he knew how to give softness by means of objects only half revealed, and firmness by the introduction of sharp contrasts; and so self-reliant is he that he will sometimes, as it were in sport, place a figure clothed in *white* in relief against a sky of *light*, or a gray figure on a gray background, or red upon red. Nothing indeed puzzles him; and he seems to take a delight in varying almost infinitely these combinations of colour.

Much curiosity has been felt as to the opinion of Teniers, whom all acknowledge to have been a practical philosopher, on the much vexed question of marriage. Through his jovial friend Pantagruel, he suggested two courses to Panurgus; and his admirers are anxious to learn which of the two he followed himself. Be it then known, by those who are curious on this subject, that Teniers was twice married. The anecdotes connected with his courtship are somewhat fanciful, but, nevertheless, interesting to amateurs. He was engaged, we are told, in painting a picture of Hymen, for a gentleman who was "about to marry." In this piece, Hymen is, as usual, represented fascinating when viewed from afar, but repulsive when seen too close. This *chef-d'œuvre* the Archduke Leopold had purchased, and placed on a kind of platform, at the end of his gallery. To mount this platform it was necessary to ascend a very slippery step. From the hither side of this step the view was delightful; but when once the step was passed, all the charm vanished. There resided at Antwerp a lovely young maiden, of the name of Anne, daughter of the celebrated painter, Breughel de Velours. Now, at the time when Teniers began to think

"That it were wise to look about  
For some kind soul to help him out,"

Anne Breughel was still under age, and the ward of no less than three guardians, Corneille Schut, Van Balen, and Rubens. The father must, indeed, have had a high opinion of the personal and mental attractions of a daughter who could only be intrusted to the care of three such illustrious guardians. One day that she was inspecting the pictures in the Archduke's gallery, this masterpiece of Hymen was pointed out to her, and Teniers himself persuaded the young maiden to ascend the slippery step. The company laughed; and thus Anne Breughel became the wife of Teniers.

## CLAUDE LORRAIN.

**I**N his passionate love of nature, Claude Lorrain has invested her with the dignity and attributes of his radiant genius. Like his own sweet spirit—lofty and serene amid all the fluctuations of fortune—his landscapes are always calm, noble, and fresh from the sources of the pure light within. He was among the fraternity of painters what the eagle is among birds; and, like the monarch of the feathered tribe, he alone seems to have possessed the enviable power of looking the sun in the face. No other landscape painter has ever equalled him in his radiant atmospheres, which are as necessary to the life of the landscape as breath is to that of man.

The greatest landscape painters have always stamped their productions with their own idio-



CATTLE WATERING. FROM A PAINTING BY CLAUDE LORRAIN.

syncracies. Ruysdael awakens in us the half-obliterated memories of our early childhood. Salvator, prompted by a temperament poetically wild, conjures up scenes which seem the natural asylums of the freebooters of the sixteenth century. Everdingen studies in nature nothing but her pine forests, her torrents, her cataracts, and her wildernesses. Hobbema delights in her sylvan and silent retreats. Berghem invests her with the types of rural peace and happiness. Van der Neer envelops her in a veil of melancholy; and Nicolas Poussin gives to his landscape giant proportions, as though nature herself were too confined for the expansive conception of his genius. But Claude, the unapproached and unapproachable Claude, bathes all the creations of his fancy in his own pure light.

It would seem that the love of the marvellous alone suggested those singular traditions which have been handed down to us concerning the childhood of Claude. Genius as he undoubtedly was, he

did not commence his career, as the wonder-makers allege, by being either an idiot or an apprentice to a confectioner. Baldinucci, who procured the materials for his history of the first period of Claude's career from the nephews of the landscape-painter, gives a very different account of the promise of his early life. In his "Academy of Painting," Joachim Sandrart differs a little from the Italian biographer. But the evidence of Sandrart is only valuable where it has reference to Claude during his residence at Rome. In all other respects we would sooner believe the accounts given by Claude's relations than Baldinucci's memoir.

Claude Gellée, surnamed Lorrain, was born in the year 1600, at Chamagne Hall, which stands on the banks of the Moselle, near the Vosges mountains, in the diocese of Toul. He was the third son of John Gellée. His elder brother, who was named John, after his father, was by profession a wood-engraver, at Friburg, in Brisgau. Left an orphan at twelve years of age, Claude had no other guardian than his brother, who kindly received him into his house at Friburg. The young orphan



THE HERDSMAN. FROM A PAINTING BY CLAUDE LORRAIN.

soon displayed a great taste for drawing, in the production of many highly grotesque figures. There is, therefore, no foundation for the story which so many biographers—who would not take the trouble to consult the only authentic source of information—have related, that Claude was apprenticed to a confectioner; and the account of his mental imbecility in early youth as contrasted with his subsequent intellectual superiority, is equally unconfirmed. But, howsoever this may have been, it is clear that Claude had been travelling about with his brother for more than a twelvemonth, when a lace-merchant, a near relative of the family, undertook a journey to Rome. We say *undertook*, for in those days locomotion on so great a scale was a very expensive and hazardous affair.

The young painter, who had perhaps some secret presentiment of his future greatness, was determined not to let the opportunity slip. He therefore accompanied his relative on his pilgrimage to the Eternal City, and after a tedious journey, undiversified by any hairbreadth escapes or amorous adventures, arrived safely at Rome. He took up his quarters in the Rotondo, and began to put into practice the principles which he had gleaned from his brother. With the most rigid economy, he managed

to subsist upon the slender pittance with which his family supplied him from France. The war, however, which, after he had been studying for about three or four years at Rome, broke out on a sudden between Austria and the Protestant powers of Europe—the terrible Thirty Years' War—rendered all communication with the countries on the further side of the Alps difficult, if not impossible.

At the beginning of that protracted and disastrous conflict, Claude Lorrain was about eighteen years of age. When the scanty supplies from his own country ceased, he was obliged to leave Rome and to take up his quarters at Naples with a Cologne painter of the name of Godefroy Wals, who had achieved a great name, and from whom Claude gained a knowledge of architectural drawing and perspective. He remained but two years in Godefroy's *atelier*, but he managed, in that short time, to master the art with which he afterwards assimilated the two elements of the great success of his landscapes,—we mean ancient monuments, and depth of scenery—in other words, architecture and perspective.

More rich in professional skill and in confidence in his own powers than in "ways and means," he returned to Rome, where he became an inmate of the establishment of Augustin Tassi, not so much in the capacity of a pupil or apprentice, as in that of a servant or retainer, if we may believe the evidence of Sandrart, who enters into very minute details of this part of Claude's history.

Augustin Tassi was a follower of the celebrated landscape painter, Paul Bril; and though a martyr to the gout, he had, nevertheless, a natural gaiety of disposition which made him an agreeable companion, even when suffering from the periodical attacks of his enemy. He lived in great style, and kept open house for the people of quality at Rome. The College of Cardinals had just given him an order to paint for their council-chamber architectural ornaments, scenes in perspective, sea-pieces, and landscapes. As, however, Augustin Tassi bore already upon his head the weight of some sixty winters, he could not get on without the assistance of an active *employé* to superintend his household, see that his horses were well cared for, and look into his financial affairs while he, Tassi, welcomed his guests, plied his brush, or directed the labours of those who were decorating the council-chamber of the Cardinals.

Now, Claude was exactly the man that Tassi required, clever enough to assist the painter in his professional labours, and poor enough to be compelled to serve him. Good, however, often comes out of apparent evil, and in the case of Claude there is no doubt that familiar intercourse with so accomplished a man, and the advantage of listening to the learned conversations which took place every day in the *atelier* of a painter so highly respected by the princes of the church, greatly contributed to the cultivation and refinement of the mind of a man whose education had been hitherto so desultory and uncertain. He continued to act in the capacity of half pupil, half retainer of Tassi until the spring of 1625.

History is, however, always silent when we are most anxious that she should speak out boldly and without equivocation. In the memoirs of illustrious men, how seldom does she throw any light on those obscure phases of existence through which they have passed while struggling on the threshold of the Temple of Fame—the hard apprenticeship they have undergone while seeking

"To rise from out the prison of their low estate,  
And with such gems as the aspiring mind  
Wins from the caves of knowledge, buy their ransom  
From those twin gaolers of the human breast,  
Low birth and iron fortune."

Alas, how many there be who, having caught a glimpse from afar of the promised land, have perished miserably by the way in all the anguish of despair, without a record of their hopes, fears, struggles, disappointments, and death. Who does not long to be enlightened upon the dark and unpromising prospects of the early life of the illustrious men of old?—their first unsuccessful struggles, their tantalising expectations, the obstacles they had to overcome while emerging out of darkness into day? Those brilliant constellations, which now shine with so steady a light in the firmament of fame, are the objects of a legitimate curiosity. All would wish to penetrate the secret of their distant origin, and trace the course by which from the twilight of obscurity they gradually reached their zenith.

In the spring of the year 1625 Claude quitted Rome on his return to his native country. He

travelled through the north of Italy, and took Venice by the way: After passing through the Tyrol, he stopped some time in Bavaria, where he painted two views of the environs of Munich. In Suabia he was attacked by highwaymen, who stripped him of everything he had; and after various adventures and very narrow escapes he stood once more upon the banks of his native Moselle, and gazed with all a painter's enthusiasm upon the river which he had not seen since he was twelve years of age. The sight must have inspired him with the sentiments which our own poet has so beautifully breathed in words:—

“I feel the gales that from thee blow  
A momentary bliss bestow,  
As waving fresh their gladsome wing,  
My weary soul they seem to soothe,  
And redolent of joy and youth,  
To breathe a second spring.”

How he employed his time after his return to Chamagne Hall, or what impressions a journey of so many months, in which nature must have appeared under such different aspects, made upon his susceptible and imaginative mind, we know not, for his biographers are silent upon the subject. They say, however, that, after having settled some family matters, he started for Nancy, and was there introduced to Claude de Ruet, a Lorrain painter, of high repute. This *virtuoso* was a pupil of the great Tempesta, and the rival of Callot. At the time he became acquainted with Claude Lorrain, he stood first on the list of artists at Nancy. Duke Henry II. had made him a peer, and his mode of living was in keeping with his elevated position. His carriages were costly, his horses of the best breed. De Ruet, at Nancy, like Augustin Tassi at Rome, was engaged in works highly important and productive—to wit, the decoration of the ceilings of the Carmelite Church, at which some Italian artists were working under his direction. Claude Lorrain, who had perfected himself in perspective under Godefroy Walss, was anxious to acquire the same proficiency in figure painting. De Ruet promised to give him the necessary instruction, and in the meantime kept him hard at work for more than a year at the decoration of the chapel ceiling. Work so dry and uninteresting was very distasteful to Claude, whose imagination still glowed with the recollection of the bright skies of Italy, with its ancient monuments, and its inspiring scenery. While he was devising the means of returning to Rome, an accident happened to one of the gilders whom he employed in filling up some of the details of his designs, which gave him a thorough disgust of the dangerous distinction of painting on a scaffolding. The gilder, while intent upon his work, made a false step, and fell from the dizzy height. He would have been killed upon the spot, but for the providential interruption of a transverse beam to which he clung for an instant. Claude had just time to get down before the weight of the gilder's person carried with it the instrument of his preservation, and rescue his *employé* from his perilous position. The danger, however, which they had both run, made an indelible impression on the painter, who from that hour determined to abandon an occupation which afforded no scope for the development of his genius. He therefore started for Italy *via* Lyons and Marseilles. A severe illness detained him for months at the last-mentioned port; but he was at length able to embark for Civita Vecchia, in company with another French painter of the name of Charles Erard, of Nantes. They had a rough passage, and were tossed about for a long time on the coast of Italy, but in the month of October, 1627, to his great joy Claude beheld once more the dome of St. Peter's, and curiously enough made his entry into the Eternal City just as the people were celebrating the festival of St. Luke, the patron of painters.

#### “TOBIT AND THE ANGEL.”

The German *virtuoso*, Joachim Sandrart, who has penned the life of Claude, tells us that he often met this chief of landscape-painters among the rocks and the waterfalls of Tivoli. “When he discovered,” says he, “that I painted my rocks rather after nature than as my fancy suggested, he expressed his approval of my plan, and he profited so well by my example, that he managed, with intense labour and untiring perseverance, to execute some beautiful landscapes, which amateurs purchased at a high price, but of which the supply was very inadequate to the demand.”

The two artists Claude and Sandrart were soon intimate friends, and together they searched the classic environs of Rome for subjects for their *capella*.

While Sandrart, following the bent of his own genius, chose fantastic rocks, gnarled and knotty trunks of trees, waterfalls, impressive ruins or edifices which, in his opinion, were the best suited for historical landscape, Claude seized on objects less striking or grotesque, and above all gave his particular attention to the gradual diminution of size from the middle distance to the horizon, or in other words, to the phenomena of aerial perspective.

In the painting of "Tobit and the Angel," from which our engraving is copied, we see how



THE LANDING OF CLEOPATRA. FROM A PAINTING BY CLAUDE LORRAINE.

admirably this perspective is managed—how naturally and almost imperceptibly the objects diminish in proportion, from the angel in the foreground to the bridge in the distance—and how artistically this diminution in size is managed with reference to those things which stand, like the castle in the distance, on a precipitous height.

Who can gaze on the graceful forms and naturally represented beauties of these trees without boiling with indignation at the egotistical, affected, and illiterate calumnies which the self-constituted



advocate of the pre-Raphaelite school has brought against Claude! After giving, as specimens of correct tree-drawing, some of his own hideous abortions, which bear about the same relation to Claude's inspired and immortal productions as the Satyr to Hyperion, this ignorant and conceited depreciator proceeds to say, in his own finikin and affected style:—

THE DANCE BY THE WATER-SIDE. FROM A PAINTING BY CLAUDE LORRAIN.



"Well, but do not the trunks of trees fork, and fork mostly into two arms at a time?

"Yes, but under a stern anatomical law, as the limbs of an animal; and those hooked junctions in plate 4 (an execrable caricature of Claude's inimitable designs) are just as accurately representative of the branching of wood as this (fig. 2) (here follows the fac-simile of a Dutch doll) is of a neck and

shoulders. We should object to such a representation of shoulders, because we have some interest in and knowledge of human form ; we do not object to Claude's trees, because we have no interest in nor knowledge of trees."

As far as the author of the rhodomontade we have here quoted is concerned, this is perfectly true ; but he should have limited his confession of ignorance to the first person singular.

"And if it be still alleged that such work is, nevertheless, enough to give any one an 'idea' of a tree, I answer that it never gave, nor ever will give, an idea of a tree to any one who loves trees ; and that, moreover, no idea, whatever its pleasantness, is of the smallest value which is not founded on simple facts. What pleasantness may be in wrong ideas we do not here inquire ; the only question for us has always been, and must always be, what are the facts ?

"And, assuredly, those boughs of Claude's are not facts ; and every one of their contours is, in the worst sense, unfinished, without even the expectation or faint hope of possible refinement ever coming into them. I do not mean to enter here into the discussion of the characters of ramification ; that must be in our separate inquiry into tree-structure generally."

This criticism, when we view it in reference to the exquisite finish of the trees in our engraving, would be quite incomprehensible to any one who was not aware how far ignorance and prejudice will distort the mind and the vision.

The object of the pre-Raphaelite is to build up Turner's reputation upon the ruins of that of all rivals in the same style, and he therefore hurls his *brutum fulmen* at Claude, Constable, De Wint, or any other artist whose success may seem to interfere with the autocracy of his idol. The following passage is a good instance of the sweeping nature of his condemnation. In analysing the beauties of a tree-stem stripped of its foliage in Turner's drawing of Bolton Abbey, he says, "In order to show its perfectness better by contrast with *bad work*, as we have had, I imagine, enough of Claude, I will take a bit of Constable. It differs from the Claude outline merely in being the kind of work which is produced by an uninventive person dashing about idly with a brush, instead of drawing determinately wrong with a pen : on the one hand worse than Claude's, in being lazier ; on the other a little better, in being more free, but as a representative of tree-form still wholly barbarous. One can almost see Constable first bending it to the right, turning to the left, then, having gone long enough to the left, away to the right again, then dividing it ; and because there is another tree in the picture with two long branches, he knows that this ought to have three or four, which must undulate, or go backwards and forwards," &c. &c.

This futile attack upon Claude and Constable is merely for the purpose of bringing in a flourish about Turner, whose trumpeter adds, "Then study the bit of Turner work : note first its quietness, unattractiveness, apparent carelessness, whether you look at it or not ; next note the subtle curvatures within the narrowest limits, and, where it branches, the unexpected, out-of-the-way things it does—just what nobody could have thought of its doing," &c. &c. &c. But enough of this, which is as sickening to a sensible mind as the random rhapsodies of Robert Browning or his spasmodic followers.

#### "CATTLE WATERING."

There was at this time in Rome a Frenchman, who swayed even the Italians themselves by the influence of his superior mind. That Frenchman was Nicholas Poussin, who had been settled in the Eternal City ever since the spring of 1624. Attracted by the light of his genius, were congregated around him names famous in the history of painting—Le Valentin, Le Guaspre, James Stella, Peter de Laer, surnamed *Bamboche*, and many others. These kindred spirits Poussin protected, encouraged, and cautioned with affectionate solicitude against the dangers of mannerism. If historical painting owes its recognised existence as a branch of art to Titian and Annibal Carraci, Poussin is the painter from whom it derives its identity, and who has always been reckoned the first model for imitation in this style.

Claude Lorrain and Poussin were kindred spirits, and the intimacy which a congeniality of taste engendered soon ripened into friendship. There is no doubt that Claude's style was much modified by his intercourse with his illustrious fellow-countryman and contemporary. His genius for landscape painting was polished and refined by the advice and information he derived from the noble-hearted

Poussin. The exquisite taste he has shown in the choice of the monuments, temples, towers, and ruins wherewith he has adorned his landscapes, is partly attributable to the hints suggested by his friend. But after all, the real master of Claude, the source from which he derived all his brightest inspirations, was the sun. There is in this painting of "The Watering Place," from which our engraving is copied, a mellow radiance which none but Claude could transfer from the canopy of heaven to canvas. Claude's object was to plunge more deeply into the secret mysteries of nature than any of his predecessors. He sought to surprise, if we may use the expression, his master the sun at all hours of his toilette, and to get by rote, as it were, not the freaks alone, but the harmony of light. Often would he rise before daybreak that he might study the effects of early dawn, and while the sons of sloth were losing in sleep the most glorious of all visions,—the rising of an Italian sun,—Claude, posted on some commanding height like an advanced sentinel of the legion of art, was rapt in admiration of the graces of Aurora as she sallied forth in garments of glory from the golden portals of the east. Thus did he sketch in his mind, without the aid of pencil or of paint, his luminous landscapes. He watched the rapid changes in the shade of colour when at the dawn of a beautiful Italian day the sun appears at first of a silvery hue encircled with a white haze. This whiteness becomes almost yellow as the disc rises above the horizon. The yellow changes into orange, the orange into vermillion, the vermillion darkens into violet; and thus by degrees the god of day runs up his dazzling scale of brightness. These are the effects of light which Claude endeavoured to reproduce upon his canvas after he had impressed them on his memory. And as his attention was riveted rather upon effects than causes, he felt certain that no troublesome recollection of some minute detail of vegetation would mar the repose of the *tout ensemble* of his tableau. Thus his study, or we should rather say his genius, went on *pari passu* with the sun himself, who spreads over the infinite discrepancies of nature the uniform mantle of his illimitable light.

#### "THE HERDSMAN."

Claude's perspective is perfect. His object was to pierce, to all appearance, through the canvas by the magic power of art, and represent the immeasurable distances which the eye can comprehend in space. Above all was he anxious to maintain the relative size of objects, and the uniform harmony of nature in all her works, when the sun at his zenith pours from a cloudless sky a glorious flood of light and heat.

The painting of "The Herdsman" is a striking illustration of the meaning of Claude's biographer when he says that the distinguishing characteristics of the French master are "depth and monuments." The aerial perspective of this piece is so magic in its effect that we really seem to gaze *through* the canvas on a remote landscape, while in the foreground and the middle distance the respective sizes and harmony of the objects are so well preserved that they vanish imperceptibly.

At Rome the genius of Claude was soon recognised by an admiring crowd of amateurs. It was indeed impossible for him to hide his light under a bushel. He shone with all the brilliancy of that Italian sun to which he offered such continual incense. His fame, like the light of his own landscapes, spread through the country, passed the barriers of land and sea, traversed France and Spain, and princes, potentates, cardinals, and even the pope himself, vied with each other in their eagerness to become possessed of "a Claude" at any price.

Baldinucci has bequeathed to us interesting particulars concerning the names of these depositaries of our painter's *chefs-d'œuvre*, and of the price they gave for them. Two landscapes which had been ordered by the Cardinal Bentivoglio, when shown to Pope Urban VIII., were considered so beautiful, that his holiness, after affirming the superiority of Claude over all other landscape-painters, begged from him four more pictures, among which was a sea-piece, in which Claude introduced all the pope's galleys. He also painted for this liberal patron of the fine arts two Village Festivals, which were so much in the spirit of the Mantuan bard that they might have passed for illustrations of scenes in the Bucolics. In one of these brilliant pastorals, the wedding of a simple goatherd lends a hallowed charm to the beauties of nature and the glories of the horizon. The college of cardinals followed as usual in the wake of the pope, and as pagan philosophy had been in vogue in the Vatican ever since the days of Leo X., the princes of the church seized with delight the opportunity of framing in gold and ebony some of Claude's illustrations of Ovid's amorous scenes, such, for instance, as the

loves of "Cupid and Psyche," and the legend of that nymph Egeria, who was transformed into a fountain.

"Egeria! Sweet creation of some heart,  
Which found no mortal resting-place so fair  
As thine ideal breast, whate'er thou art,  
The nympholepsy of some fond despair,



A WATERING PLACE FOR CATTLE. FROM A PAINTING BY CLAUDE LORRAIN.

Or, it might be, a beauty of the earth,  
Who found a more than common votary there,  
Too much adoring! Whate'er thy birth,  
Thou wert a beautiful thought, and softly bodied forth.

"Here didst thou dwell, in this enchanted cover,  
Egeria! thy all heavenly bosom beating  
For the far footsteps of thy mortal lover.  
The purple midnight veiled that mystic meeting



CLAUDE LORRAIN.

With her most starry canopy. And seating  
Thyself by thine adorer, what befall?  
The cave was surely shaped out for the greeting  
Of an enamoured goddess, and the cell  
Haunted by holy love—the earliest oracle!



“ And didst thou not, thy breast to his replying,  
Blend a celestial with a human heart!  
And love, which dies, as it was born, in sighing,  
Share with immortal transports! Could thine art  
Make them, indeed, immortal, and impart  
The purity of heaven to earthly joys?  
Expel the venom, and not blunt the dart?  
The dull satiety which all destroys;  
And root from out the soul the deadly weed which glays!”

“THE LANDING OF CLEOPATRA.”

All over Europe Claude's pieces are held  
in high estimation, and so rare have they  
become through the eager competition of  
picture-fanciers, that they are now but rarely  
found save in the princely residences of our  
own aristocracy, or in the national collections

of different countries. The Louvre is very rich in the productions of this great master. Among these, which are sixteen in number, one of the most remarkable is "The Landing of Cleopatra," from which our engraving is copied. This celebrated *chef-d'œuvre* is valued, in the catalogue which was made in 1816, at the enormous price of £30,000 francs, or £5,000.

In this artistic production, Claude's knowledge of aerial perspective is especially remarkable. The time of evening—the hour of sunset—was that which the artist was most fond of representing on his canvas. At the moment when the orb is sinking below the sea, and throws over the surface of the waters a carpet of light—when a breath of air ripples the wave—the golden light breaks, in a thousand dazzling scintillations, from the smiling bosom of the deep. In the sky the clouds are scattered far and wide. Some few are spread in long vistas of light, even to the very edge of the vanishing orb. On the shore stand the gorgeous palaces of ancient times, and porticos whose classical columns are shadowless, enveloped, as they are, in an atmosphere of light; statues of Parian marble, ranged in rows along the terraces, are bathed in a kind of golden dust. The galleys are at their moorings, and the evening rays, which pass through the rigging, trace on the surface of old ocean the lengthened images of the barks. Along the beach are strolling figures, which seem, as it were, dazzled by the light of the setting sun; and some of them are using their broad hats as parasols, against his blinding rays.

Far away on the horizon, the disc is, to all appearance, entering a palace of fire, and will soon vanish in the midst of a conflagration, which all the waves of all the seas could never quench, but which will soon fade away, passing, by degrees, from vermillion to violet, azure, deep blue, and, at last—darkness!

The most remarkable feature in Claude is, that he seldom appears as great as he really is, until he has passed the middle distance of his piece, and has commenced his rivalry with the air. His foreground is generally composed of palaces or masses of trees, which serve as lobbies to the grand arena on which he displays all his genius. He has, indeed, been criticised for the apparent sameness of his foregrounds; but the relief they give to the other parts of the picture is very cleverly managed. The effect is produced rather by the whole mass of shade than by each separate shadow; and, notwithstanding the darkening effect of the sum total of demi-tints, the whole piece is beautifully luminous.

Claude has also the peculiar merit of having been the first artist who ever studied the laws of refraction when painting the sun mirroring himself in the glassy surface of the sea. "If the water," said La Fontaine, "while reflecting my cane, makes it crooked, my reason corrects the defect." But the artist consulted nature alone, without making use of any subtle arguments on the phenomenon.

#### "THE DANCE BY THE WATER-SIDE."

In the conception of his landscape scenes, of which the object was principally to illustrate the beauties of the country, Claude avoided the introduction of any very striking subject. He feared lest the attention of the spectator, being riveted on the salient points of the piece, would be entirely diverted from the landscape. In the "Dance by the Water-side," which we reproduce in our engraving, the painter is anxious to please by the brilliancy of his light, the beauty of his design, and the skilful management of his perspective. His figures in the foreground are not made, individually, of prominent importance. They are in harmony with the nature of the scene, but they leave us at liberty to analyse the features which distinguish this characteristic *chef-d'œuvre*.

While Claude was working at a sacred subject for the King of Spain, he was informed that a similar painting, bearing his signature, had been sold at a high price by some one who had forged his name, and imitated his style.

The case was not a singular one. Unprincipled imitators were injuring our great landscape-painter, not only in fortune but in fame.

As a measure, therefore, of self-protection, Claude determined to keep sketches of all the paintings, which issued from his *atelier*, endorsed with the names of the persons for whom they were executed. He also made a portfolio, in which he gave, in outline merely, all his fine conceptions. This portfolio he named "Book of Invention," or Book of Truth. Its value is beyond all calculation; and the late Duke of Devonshire, who was fortunate enough to become the possessor of it, considered it the most valuable part of his property.

Actuated, however, by the greed of gain, Claude's imitators found the means of defeating all his precautions. Admitted as friends into his *atelier*, they carried away with them so correct a notion of his paintings on the easel that they often succeeded in finishing a copy before the original appeared, and in palming it off as a genuine "Claude." Our artist was in consequence obliged to close his *atelier* against all comers, with the exception of some few distinguished and trusted friends, such as Poussin, the Cardinal Bentivoglio, the Prince Panfili, and the Colonna.

He had, properly speaking, no pupil; although his biographers mention the names of two—Hermann Swanewelt and Le Courtois. His imitators are, however, in number, a whole legion. All the German, Dutch, and Spanish apprentices of the art, who sought inspiration on classic ground, were eager to follow in his wake. Our own school of landscape-painters are all imbued—if we except the pre-Raphaelite disciples of Turner—with the spirit of Claude. It is to the study of the *chef-d'œuvre* bequeathed to us by this great painter that they owe their greatest triumphs.

Claude was vigorous, energetic, and inspired to the very last. In the Queen's gallery there is "a Claude," which bears the date 1682; and, as the painter was born in 1600, he must have been eighty-two years of age at the time of its completion. His illustrious career was, however, drawing to a close. In the December of that same year, 1682, he breathed his last in that country whose glorious sunshine, lovely scenery, and imperishable monuments had inspired him with so many beautiful conceptions.

He was buried at Rome, in the church of the Holy Trinity; but, in the month of July, 1840, his ashes were removed to the church of St. Louis des Français, and this inscription graven on his monument:—

"France does not forget her illustrious children who perish abroad."

#### "THE ANCIENT FORUM."

Like most of the great masters of his time, Claude was well skilled in aquafortis engraving. As early as 1636, he had himself engraved many of his principal paintings, and among these "The Campo Vaccino," in which we see conspicuously illustrated the grandeur of the Eternal City. The area of this piece is the ancient forum; an enormous circus, full of life and light, inclosed by those imperishable monuments of Roman art—the Arch of Septimus Severus, the Temple of Antoninus, the ruins of the Altar of Concord, and, farther in the distance, the Coliseum and the Arch of Titus. Who can gaze upon these imperishable relics of the world's vanished glory, without recalling the equally imperishable verses of our own great poet?

"Oh, Rome, my country! City of the soul!  
The orphans of the heart may turn to thee,  
Lone mother of dead empires! and control,  
In their shut breasts, their petty misery!  
What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see  
The cypress—hear the owl; and plod your way  
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, ye  
Whose agonies are evils of a day.  
A world is at our feet—as fragile as our clay!

"The Niobe of nations! There she stands,  
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;  
An empty urn within her withered hands,  
Whose holy dust was scattered long ago!  
The Scipio's tomb contains no ashes now!  
The very sepulchres lie tenantless  
Of their heroic dwellers! Dost thou flow,  
Old Tiber, through a marble wilderness?  
Rise with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress.

"The Goth, the Christian—Time, War, Flood, and Fire,  
Have dealt upon the Seven-hilled City's pride.  
She saw her glories, star by star, expire;  
And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride,

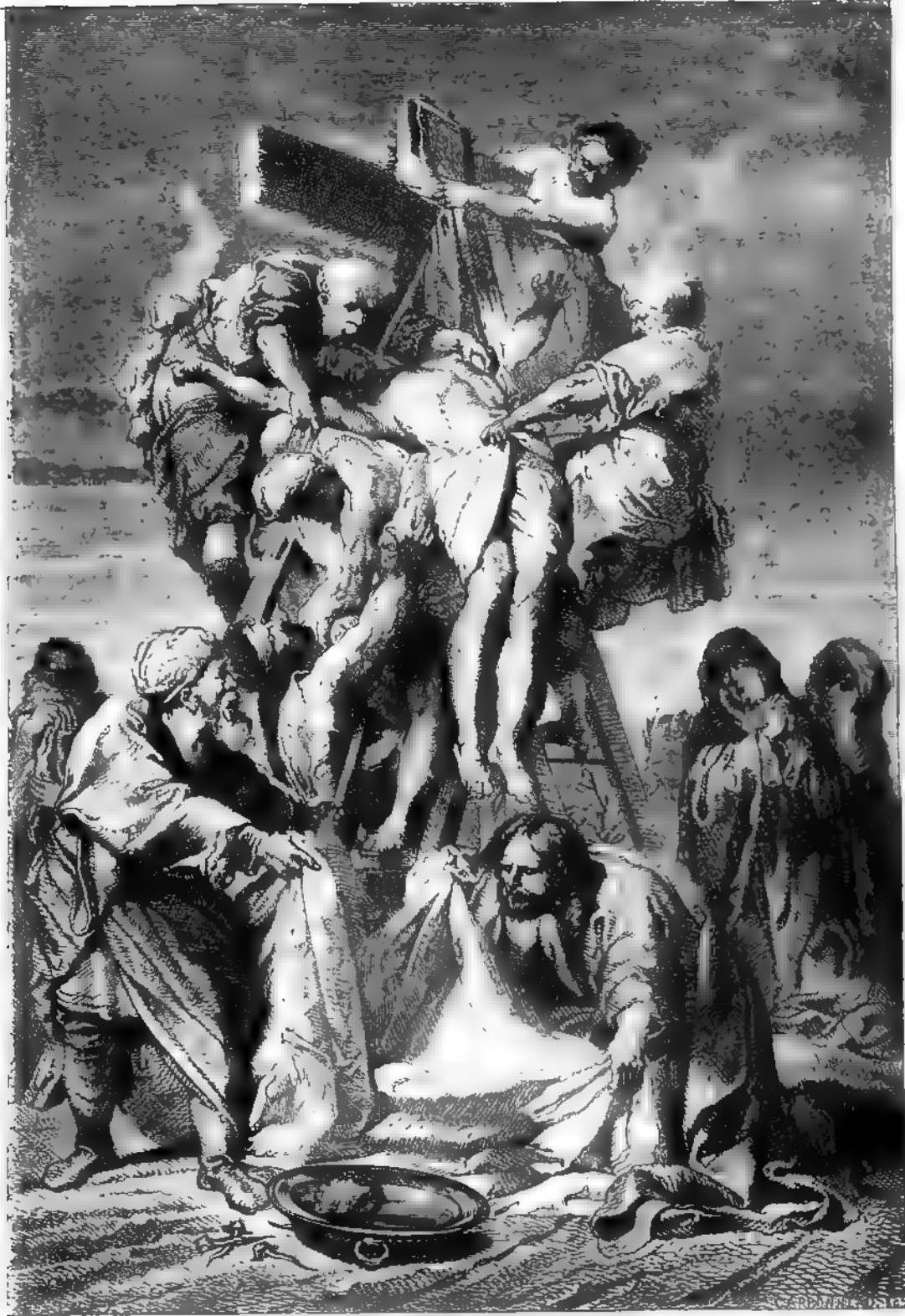
Where the car climbed the capitol : far and wide,  
 Temple and tower went down ; nor left a site.  
 Chasm of ruins ! Who shall trace the void,  
 O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,  
 And say here was, or is, where all is doubly night ?



THE ANCIENT FORUM. FROM A PAINTING BY CLAUDE LORRAINE.

A ruin ! Yet what ruin ! From its mass,  
 Walls, palaces, half cities have been reared.  
 Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,  
 And marvel where her spoil could have appeared.  
 Hath it, indeed, been plundered, or but cleared ?  
 Alas ! developed, opens the decay.  
 When the colossal fabric's form is neared,  
 It will not bear the brightness of the day,  
 Which streams too much on all years—man have left away.





THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS. FROM A PAINTING BY JOHN JOUBERT.

"While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;  
 When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall;  
 And when Rome falls—the world! From our own land  
 Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall,  
 In Saxon times, which we are wont to call  
 Ancient; and these three mortal things are still  
 On their foundations, and unaltered all!  
 Rome and her ruin past redemption's skill,  
 The world, the same wide den—of thieves, or what ye will!"

## JOHN JOUVENET.



ALMOST all the published accounts of the genealogy of Jouvenet are incorrect. Even that which is to be found in the "Universal Biography" is built on hypothesis. In a recent work founded on state papers, Mr. Hottel has proved, in the most undeniable and decisive manner, the pedigree of this numerous family: a family which has not only produced so many painters, who were eminent in their own time and place of abode, but had the honour of adding to "the firmament of fame" that "bright particular star"—"the great Jouvenet," one of the most original and masterly painters of the French school. Towards the middle of the sixteenth century, it is proved that a stranger, who was at once master of the arts of painting and sculpture, settled at Rouen, where he died before the year 1616. This artist was founder of a family of celebrities, who, in many successive generations, distinguished themselves by their works. One of the sons of this head of a family of painters, whose name was Noël Jouvenet, was (it is asserted) one of the great Poussin's masters. This Noël had three sons, whose whole lives and energies were devoted to painting.

One gave his daughter in marriage to a sculptor named Rabon; another bestowed his on a glass-stainer; and the third, Laurent Jouvenet, painter and sculptor, had fifteen children, among whom were,—Mary Magdalen, who married John Restout, a painter at Caen—father and grandfather of the Restout of the Academy of Painting; Francis Jouvenet, who was painter in ordinary to the king; and last, but certainly by none reckoned the least, John Jouvenet, who painted the celebrated "Descent from the Cross," and who was born at Rouen, April, 1644, in the parish de Saint Lô, at No. 9, Jew-street.

Our readers will, we hope, look with indulgence on this long pedigree, which we have traced thus minutely; because genius is so seldom hereditary, that this instance, or, rather, these instances, of its being handed down through so many generations, is a curious fact worthy of attention.

When John Jouvenet had learned all he could of his noble art at home (his instructors being his father and his uncles), he was sent to complete his studies in Paris. Lebrun had just founded the Academy of Fine Arts, with the concurrence of all the "Romans," as those painters were called who had brought with them from Italy precepts and practice, doctrine and style, stolen from the schools of Rome and of Bologna. Jouvenet was then just seventeen; Mignard and Lebrun were at that time undisputed masters and rulers of the French school. Poussin, who was very near his end, had yielded the sceptre to them; Lebrun had expired at the early age of thirty-eight; Largillière and Rigaud were in their cradles.

The school of the academy—imitation school of foreign art!—was in all its power and glory, and Jouvenet dropped, as it were, from the skies, and alighted in the studio of Lebrun. It is to Voltaire we owe all the accounts we have of Jouvenet's early efforts, under Lebrun's direction. In "The Age of Louis XIV.," by Voltaire, we find some interesting details about him. Jouvenet was not, as Argenville asserts, an untaught, or, rather, self-taught artist, who had caught up a few crude

notions from Laurent, his father. He must have appreciated the grand style of Lebrun, and, in some degree, have mastered it too, since he worked with him at the Versailles ceilings, at least occasionally, for nearly twenty years—namely, from 1661 to 1680. But let not this fact induce any doubt, or awaken any distrust as to the originality of his genius, and the independence of his later style. He borrowed of his master, who was a clever artist, and fertile in composition, nothing but his free, broad, easy manner, together with the technical science he possessed, and the acknowledged rules of art as applied to complicated subjects. At Lebrun's Jovenet met with Lafosse, who was four years his senior.

Jouvenet and Lafosse in historical painting, Largillière and Rigaud in portraits, and Coysevox in sculpture, seem to us the links between the school of art of the seventeenth, and that of the eighteenth century. Freedom, fire, originality, animation, caprice, elegance, and tact, were seen to succeed to the cold, majestic stiffness—the haughty sternness of the reign of Louis XIV. And if the new school has been justly accused of exaggeration, all new schools of art are, and ever will be, prone to this fault; but Jouvenet is not answerable for the follies of his successors. He is, as a painter, equally removed from Boucher on the one side, and Mignard on the other. He is fortunate enough to hold a very distinguished place, and a very marked one, too, on the very confines (as it were) of two very different schools. He has neither the faults of the one nor the other, but all the perfections of both. Even while his chief occupation was the close copying of models in the *atelier* of Lebrun, or at the Academy of Art, Jouvenet often helped his master in painting the ceilings of Versailles. He had learned that business rapidly. Doubtless, he had been in the habit of painting from his infancy; indeed, he never appears to have given his mind to any other study. All true sons of art carry on their moral and intellectual education unaided, save by a palette and a few books; and by conversation with their brother man, and observation of their mother Nature. At this early period of his life—to which, doubtless, we owe the "Winter" of his series of the four seasons, at Marly; the ceilings of the Hôtel Saint Pouanges; and the "Martyrdom of Saint Ovid" (now at the museum of Grenoble)—Jouvenet had not yet freed himself from the evil influences of his teachers and his times; but towards 1672 his manner became, as it were, unfettered, and his style began to display an originality and individuality which it never afterward resigned. In 1673, at twenty-nine years of age, he carried off the second great prize of the academy; and the same year he painted for the Goldsmiths' Company of Paris the picture entitled "May,"—which was so called because it was exhibited during the whole of the month of May, in the porch of Notre Dame. The Goldsmith's Company presented this picture to the cathedral, where, at this very time, the "Cure of the Paralytic" is still to be seen, placed in the choir, above the sculptured statues. The picture called "May" had a wonderful success with the public. It made the young painter famous. Vermeulen begged leave to engrave his pictures, and Lebrun entreated him to renew his engagement, and assist him once more in painting the ceilings at Versailles.

#### "THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS."

The sight of Christ in agony is so dreadful, that artists have generally preferred illustrating on their canvas the removal of the Redeemer's body from the "tree" to the representation of the awful catastrophe of the crucifixion.

Jouvenet's "Descent from the Cross" would have given him high rank as an artist had no other picture of his either preceded or followed it.

The time chosen by the artist is that in which the Saviour had given up the ghost. The centurion has glorified God; the people, after beholding the things that were done, have smitten their breasts, and returned desolate to their homes. The body of the blessed Lord has as yet acquired none of the rigidity of death. In the right hand we could fancy there is still pulsation—a kind of galvanic action, which may exist even after life is extinct. How admirably true are the attitudes of the men actually engaged in effecting the descent. Lo! Joseph of Arimathea, "the good man and the just," how well does the painter make him seem what he is. And the women, they who "stood by the cross of Jesus,—his mother and his mother's sister," how well is Mary's anguish depicted! how striking the representation of the premature age brought on by sorrow. Still, true to nature, there is a kind

of curiosity blended with the concern of the mother's sister. This adds to the effect produced by the representation of the deeper, holier anguish.

This picture is Jouvenet's masterpiece. It is to be found in the Louvre, and it will probably remain there while Paris exists, or as long as the canvas withstands the destroying influences of time.

About this time Jouvenet left his obscure lodging in the Quai de l'Horloge, and took possession



EXTREME UNCTION. FROM A PAINTING BY JOHN JOUVENET.

of a very large *atelier*. Here he had a piece of canvas stretched out, twenty feet wide and thirty long. This immense area was destined for the reception of "Christ Healing the Sick." In this picture are the traces of all the various talents possessed by Jouvenet, and, at the same time, of all his defects. It is remarkable for breadth of shadow, for spirited grouping, and for warmth of action. There may be a certain harshness in the forms, but we must bear in mind that this eager crowd is not sketched in courts or palaces. The greatest defect in this picture is mannerism—a draw-



back from which hardly any master, modern or ancient, is entirely free. But then what truth in the expression, what brilliancy in the hope that illumines the faces of these poor afflicted mortals, in the presence of their God!

Some of our readers will be interested in hearing that Maria Madeleine, Jouvenet's sister, was also expert in the management of the brush, so much so, that when her brother gave her in marriage to Restoul, she had a good portion of seventeen hundred and fifty francs, the produce of her own painting. Probably Jouvenet visited Rome to be present at the wedding; but certain it is, that at Paris he was godfather to Jean Marie Nattiez, junior, a portrait-painter of distinction in the reign of Louis the Fifteenth. The father of this artist had been a fellow-student of Jouvenet's at the academy.

The five following years were devoted to some of his celebrated pictures; for instance, to "Jacob Receiving his Father's Blessing," to the "Nunc Dimittis," to the "Family of Darius," &c.

In the meantime Lebrun died, and Jouvenet took his place at the head of the French school. Well did he deserve

his eminence. How sublime are his subjects; how grand his manner of handling them! Can we wonder at his success? The gospel was the constant subject of his study. The Holy Land was his scene of action; and his must have been such contemplations as the poet here describes—

#### "THE CRUCIFIXION."

"City of God! Jerusalem!

Why rushes out thy living stream?  
The turban'd priest, the hoary seer,  
The Romans in their pride are there;  
And thousands, tens of thousands, still  
Cluster round Calvary's wild hill.

"Still onward rolls the living tide;  
There rush the bridegroom and the bride;  
Prince, beggar, soldier, Pharisee;  
The old, the young, the bond, the free;  
The nation's furious multitude,  
All maddening with the cry of blood.

"'Tis glorious morn; from height to height  
Shoot the keen arrows of the light;  
And glorious, in their central shower,  
Palace of holiness and power,  
The temple on Moriah's brow  
Looks a new risen sun below.

"But woe to hill, and woe to vale!  
Against them shall come forth a wail.  
And woe to bridegroom and to bride,  
For death shall on the whirlwind ride.  
And woe to thee resplendent shrine,  
The sword is out for thee and thine.

"Hide, hide thee in the heavens, thou sun,  
Before the deed of blood is done.  
Upon the temple's haughty steep  
Jerusalem's last angels weep.  
Now see destruction's funeral pall  
Black'ning o'er Zion's sacred wall.

"Like tempests gathering on the shore,  
They hear the coming army's roar.  
They see in Zion's hall of state  
The sign that maketh desolate:  
The idol standard, pagan spear,  
The tomb, the flame, the massacre.

"They see the vengeance fall! the chain,  
The long, long age of guilt and pain;  
The exile thousand desperate years,  
The more than groans, the more than tears.  
Jerusalem, a vanished name,  
Its tribes earth's warning, scoff, and shame.

"Still pours along the multitude,  
Still rends the heavens the shout of blood!  
But in the murder's furious van,  
Who totters on! A weary man.  
A cross upon his shoulder bound;  
His brow—his frame—one gushing wound!

"And now he treads on Calvary.  
What slave upon that hill must die?  
What hand, what heart in guilt imbrued,  
Must be the mountain vulture's food?  
There stand two victims, gaunt and bare,  
Two culprits—emblems of despair!

"Yet who the third? The yell of shame.  
Is frenzied at the sufferer's name—  
Hands clenched, teeth gnashed, and vesture torn;  
The curse, the taunt, the laugh of scorn;—  
All that the dying hour can sting  
Are round thee now—thou thorn-crown'd King!

"Yet cursed and tortured—taunted, spurned—  
No wrath is for the wrath returned;  
No vengeance flashes from the eye;  
The sufferer calmly waits to die!  
The sceptre reed, the thorny crown,  
Wake on that pallid brow no frown!

"At last the word of death is given;  
The form is bound, the nails are driven.  
Now triumph, Scribe and Pharisee,  
Now, Roman, bend the mocking knee.  
The cross is reared!—the deed is done!  
There stands Messiah's earthly throne!

"This was the earth's condemning hour;  
For this hath blazed the prophet's power;  
For this hath swept the conqueror's sword;  
Hath ravèd—raised—cast down—restored!  
Persepolis, Rome, Babylon,  
For this ye sunk—for this ye shone!"

#### "EXTREME UNCTION."

There are ten pictures by Jouvenet in the Museum of the Louvre, and among them is this awfully impressive tableau of "Extreme Unction," which we have here reproduced.

The Roman Catholics recognise in their church, as many of our readers no doubt are aware, seven sacraments. Among these is the administration of extreme unction to the dying penitent. In this sacrament the priest anoints with oil the five senses of the sufferer, pronouncing absolution for all the sins he may have committed during life through their agency. The piece before us tells its own fearful tale. The attenuated limbs, the collapsed frame, the helpless attitude, all denote the presence of "the

king of terrors." The weeping friends and relatives can scarcely realise to themselves the fact that they are here witnessing the final *dénouement* of the tragedy of life.

"Oh, yes! it is a fearful thing  
To see the human soul take wing  
In any shape, in any mood:  
I've seen it rushing forth in blood;  
"I've seen it on the bursting ocean  
Strive with a swoll'n, convulsive motion;  
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed  
Of sin delirious with its dread."

To judge, however, from the appearances of this expiring Christian, his was not a case to which either of the above verses applies.

The speechless agony of the mourner at the side of his bed, who is wringing her hands in despair at the prospect of this last, last parting, shows that he had known at least how to make himself beloved. More applicable to him is the language in which the dying Christian addresses his soul, for there is a rapture of repose about him which speaks of a mind at peace with God and man.

"Vital spark of heavenly flame,  
Quit, oh quit, this mortal frame;  
Trembling, hoping, lingering, sighing,  
Oh, the pain, the blies of dying!  
"Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife,  
And let me languish into life.  
Hark! they whisper; angels say,  
Sister spirit, come away.  
"What is this absorbs me quite,  
Steals my senses, veils my sight,  
Drowns my hearing, stops my breath?  
Tell me, my soul, can this be death?"

The introduction of the supernatural vision over the sufferer's head, in which the Virgin and Child appear seated on a canopy of clouds, somewhat mars the mournful harmony of the picture.

Louis Quatorze, a munificent patron of the fine arts (the one redeeming quality he possessed), had given an order that all the pictures of the academicians should be exhibited together, in the halls of the Louvre.

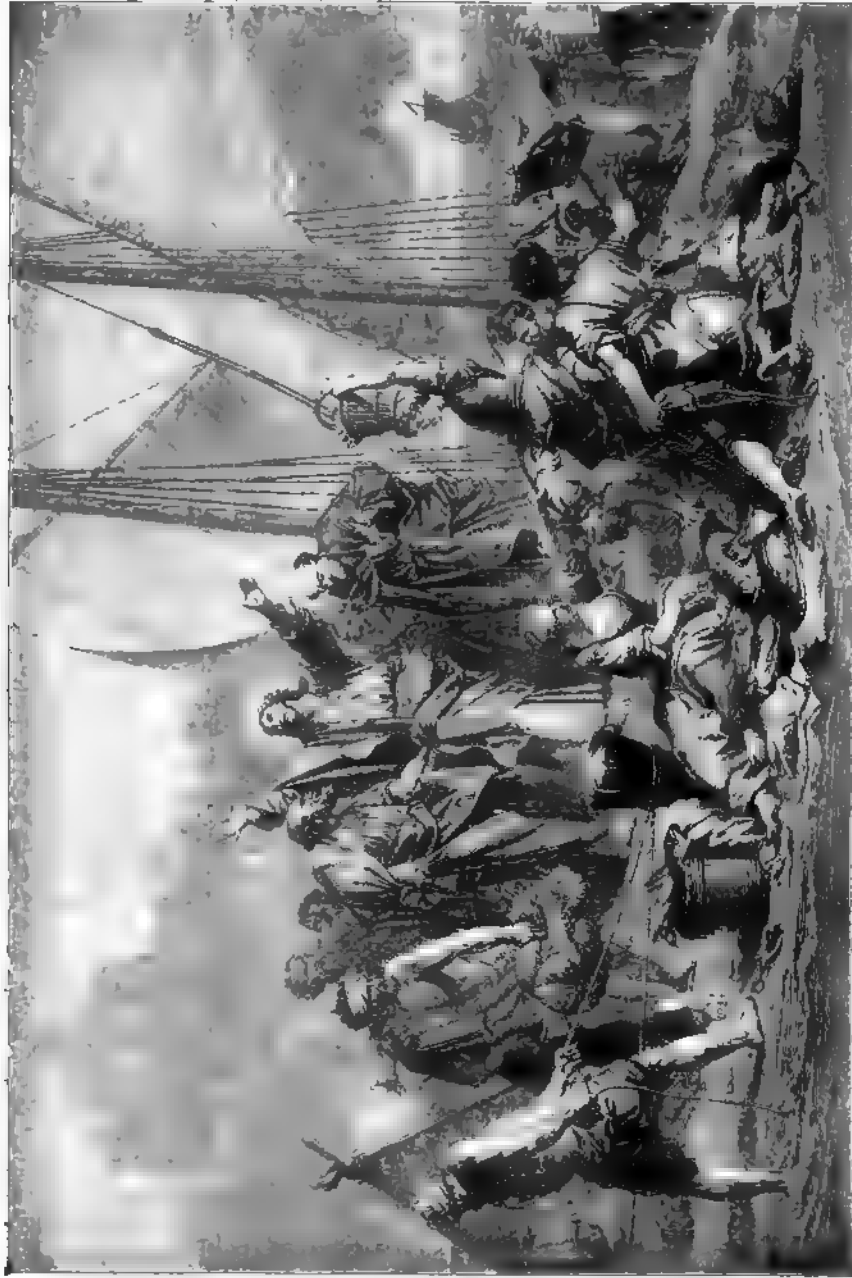
Already, in 1673, a society of artists, enrolled under the title of "Academy of Art," had given an exhibition, entitled in the catalogue—now difficult to be had at any price—"A List of the Paintings and Sculptures exhibited in the Court of the Palais Royal by the Painters and Sculptors of the Royal Academy."

Charles Lebrun contributed to this exhibition "The Defeat of Porus," "The Passage of the Granicus," "The Battle of Arbela," and "The Triumph of Alexander." The length of these four pictures alone was a hundred and thirty feet.

The catalogues of these first exhibitions are now almost out of print, and we cannot, in consequence, give any certain information as to the pictures which Jouvenet contributed. In 1699 he produced "The Clearing of the Temple," "Venus and Vulcan," "The Worship of the Magi," "A Marriage of the Virgin," "Mary Magdalen at the House of Simon the Pharisee," and "The Sacrifice of Iphigenia."

The date of the completion of "The Resurrection of Lazarus" is uncertain. But this is a matter of small importance. For it is quite clear that the *chef-d'œuvre* was painted while Jouvenet was at the zenith of his genius and his reputation. This piece is worthy of all praise, but it would be presumptuous to attempt an analysis of its merits after the simple and eloquent criticism of Monteil. "Jouvenet," said that trustworthy biographer, "was an indefatigable student of the Gospel, and it is not therefore surprising that he should have illustrated the most picturesque incidents of that sacred *répertoire*. The Gospel inspires him; his thoughts are full of it, and it gives a colouring to the medium through which he sees everything around. Fired with a holy zeal, he suddenly seizes his brush and sketches the outline of his conception. Lazarus has been already some days dead, and is buried in a grave hollowed out in the stone at the foot of the rock. The sister of Lazarus has been told that

Christ is at hand, and in 'sackcloth and ashes' she falls at his feet and implores of him to raise her brother from the dead. The scene is most affecting. Christ stands in the midst, towering in stature above the men who surround him. His face beams with the light of omnipotence, as he is about to



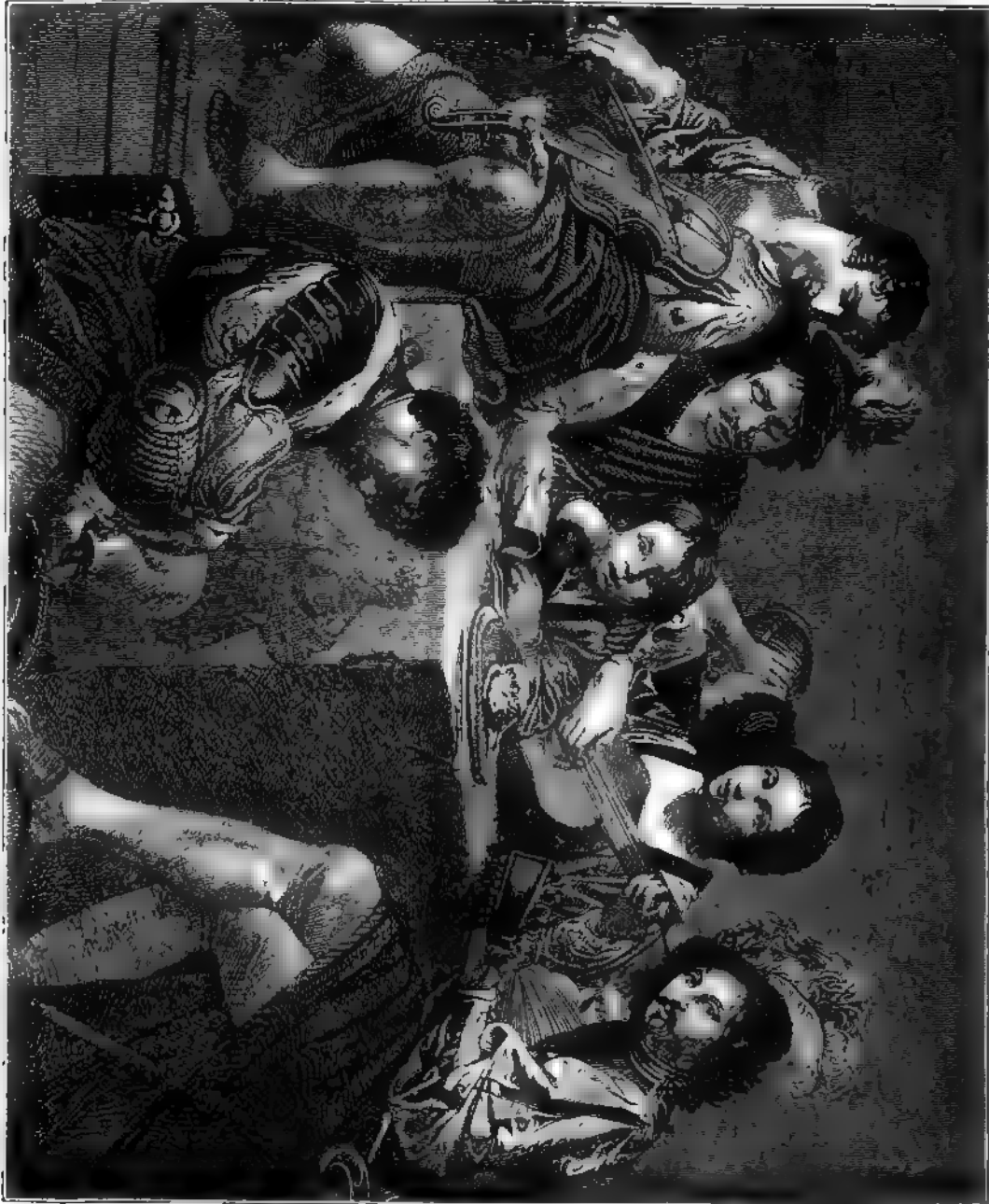
THE MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES. FROM A PAINTING BY JOUVENTIN.

make the laws of nature subservient to his will. Advancing a few steps, he bends gently over the grave in which lie the remains of Lazarus, and twice he speaks out with the authority of one to whom life and death are equally obedient, 'Lazarus, arise!' All present are struck dumb with wonder and with awe at the sight, not of the dead but of the quick. Lazarus breathes again through those



livid lips, sees again through those darkened orbs, and the pulses of life are already throbbing in the frame that had begun to moulder in the grave. The fright, the consternation of the men who have seen this miracle performed is well rendered, and the loud and long-continued cheering of the crowd

THE CONCERT. FROM A PAINTING BY VALENTIN.



are in strong contrast with the calm dignity of the apostles, who are accustomed to these exhibitions of omnipotence in their Divine Master." If this is not a grand conception, where, in the *répertoire* of all the schools, shall we find one!

We regret that we cannot reproduce the picture of which Monteil has given such a striking

description; but great as Jouvenet is in his sacred subjects, we feel that his "Resurrection of Lazarus" would lose by comparison with Rembrandt's immortal *chef-d'œuvre*, of which we gave an engraving in a preceding number.

#### "THE MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES."

This piece was the last of a series, of which the first was "The Clearing of the Temple," painted by the order of the king. In order that he might represent his sailors and his fishermen as faithfully as possible, Jouvenet made a journey to Dieppe, and from that celebrated fishing-port, where, in the season, an almost miraculous draught of herrings is no uncommon occurrence, he brought back those admirable types of *pêcheurs* and *poissardes* we see displayed in this piece. When Louis XIV., who was really a connoisseur in painting, first saw these life-like, striking figures, he ordered the artist to make copies of them in Gobelin tapestry. Jouvenet, who at that time had already been appointed assistant to the painter in ordinary in the place of Lafosse, was engaged with Coypel and Poësson in working at the frescoes of the "Invalides." His paintings of the Apostles are figures fourteen feet high, of which the sketches are preserved in the Rouen Museum. We know of very few French artists who could have infused such startling reality into such brobdignagian figures. The fame that he achieved by these productions was so great that he was soon chosen President of the Academy in the place of Coysevox, and in a short time one of the four permanent rectors in the place of Noël Coypel. About four years afterwards he wished to resign his functions, but the Academy retained him in spite of himself.

In 1709 Jouvenet was still working with all the inspiration and energy of a young man. But his mind was too enterprising for his body, and in 1713 an attack of paralysis, the result of an overwrought brain and of too much intellectual labour disabled the whole of one side of his body. The torture which the restraint of this malady occasioned Jouvenet, can be easily conceived, for, notwithstanding the advanced period of his life, he had still preserved, at sixty-nine years of age, all the exuberance of his fancy, and all the enthusiasm of his character. And now paralysis condemned him to inaction. Disabled by disease, he hovered, like a suffering spirit, around the pupils who were at work in his *atelier*.

Restout, his nephew and favourite follower, was among them endeavouring to immortalise the conceptions of the illustrious master. One day that he was engaged upon a head in a large *tableau*, Jouvenet snatched the brush from his hand with the intention of throwing more expression into the features. But the paralysed limb refused to obey the impulses of the master's genius. Quick as thought he transferred the brush from his right hand to his left, and, to the amazement of all present, painted with his wonted skill and spirit. The piece which he thus finished with his left hand was "The Death of Saint Francis," and it is preserved in the Rouen Museum. Holbein is the only master who, like Jouvenet, was equally skilful with both hands.

Jouvenet then set to work afresh, and painted with his left hand several admirable pieces which he signed "J. J., *deficiente dextrâ, sinistrâ pinxit.*"

Skill so extraordinary was of course the subject of much curiosity and interest.

The Regent, who, in the interval of the long minority of Louis XV., ruled the destinies of France, did Jouvenet the honour of visiting him at "the *atelier* of the four nations." Sebastian Ricci, during his stay in Paris, came also to see him. All the great courtiers, all the foreigners of distinction, paid him the homage which genius exacts from mediocrity. But the homage of a world could not arrest the progress of his fatal disease; and, feeling that his end was approaching, he sent for his sister, Marie Elizabeth, who had been through life his constant companion, and for his brother Francis, a painter of some merit, who had profited by Jouvenet's instructions, and on the 5th of April, 1717, expired in their arms.

#### HIS MERITS.

The last work of this great master was the "Magnificat," or "The Visitation," which still adorns the Cathedral of Notre Dame at Paris. "Nothing could furnish a more correct idea of the genius of this immortal painter," says l'Abbé Langier, "than this magnificent picture. How little indication

does it give of the approaching extinction of so brilliant a constellation in the firmament of art. What grandeur! what imagination! what power! how gorgeous, and yet how touching is the effect! How poor, mean, and uninspired are all the surrounding pictures, when compared with this masterpiece of the French artist!"

Nearly all the biographers who have written memoirs of Jouvenet have spoken well of him. He has never had to submit to those variations of the popular thermometer which affect the reputations of men less unquestionably great. D'Argenville appreciated him at his proper value. Voltaire was loud in his praises, although he reckoned him inferior to Lebrun. Taillasson says that Jouvenet is to Poussin what Cr billon is to Corneille; and Lecarpentier says that Jouvenet occupies the same place in the French that Rembrandt does in the Dutch school.

Chenuevi re has made some very just observations on what he calls the provincial originality of Jouvenet. Educated in Paris, and constantly resident in that metropolis, he has adopted many of the peculiarities of the French school. But his provincialisms are nevertheless too striking and numerous to escape observation. He became French without ceasing to be Norman. Often can we trace in his men of the lower orders, a heroic stature, and a haughty mien, such as we discover in the piece of "The Miraculous Draught of Fishes." The limbs of these figures are, perhaps, somewhat too colossal, although naturally disposed. Unluckily for Jouvenet his colouring, which was so much admired at first, does not stand the test of time. It is rather his execution, or more correctly, the force of his touch, and the firmness of his handling, which make him so great a favourite with the connoisseurs, while the public admire him for the size of his pictures and their dramatic effect.

Very few of the *chefs-d' uvre* of this master have found their way into the collection of private individuals. Their size and the subjects of which they treat make them more suitable for churches and public museums. There are ten pictures by Jouvenet in the Louvre. The Museum at Nancy contains "The Triumph of Flora," and that of Toulouse, "Christ removed from the Cross." At Lyons are preserved the two *chefs-d' uvre*, "The Clearing of the Temple" and "Saint Bruno at his Devotions." "The Marriage of the Virgin" is in the public library of Alen on.

---

## VALENTIN.

---



ANY pretenders to art affect to ignore the supremacy of mind over matter, and would subject the subtle realms of thought to the grosser elements of the material world. If we watch the progress of such men through the spacious galleries of the Louvre, we shall see how indifferently, or even contemptuously, they gaze on those masterpieces in which an attenuated form, and even a pale and faded colouring, illustrate some old-world conception. They will hurry with a kind of irreverence by the inspired compositions of Lesueur, in which the piety of our ancestors is personified in figures which have a kind of shadowy existence—so undecided, so ideal, and unpresuming is the execution. The only objects which can excite their admiration and enthusiasm are the sensualities of a painter, whose colouring is as meretricious as his subject.

Action, energy, muscular power, fore-shortenings, fleshy development—these are the subjects for their imitation, and the themes of their praises. As to the conception of the piece, or the spirit that breathes over the whole, they never give a thought to such unimportant matters. The beauty of the background and the harmony of the different parts are of less moment to them than the roundness of an arm or the vermillion of a cheek.

A band of robbers revelling in a cave with women of immoral character have more claims upon their sympathy than "Christ in the Garden of Olives" or "The Tomb of Arcadia."

Thorough materialists, in the worst sense of the word, they have no appreciation of anything but

flesh and blood ; and they will not allow that there is any greater merit in giving an angelic or intellectual expression to a face than there is in the truthful delineation of a neck, an arm, or a leg. They look upon all the parts of "the human form divine" as of equal importance, and as possessing each a peculiar beauty of its own. The less particular the artist is in the choice of his subject, the more they



THE GUARDIAN. FROM A PAINTING BY VALENTIN.

like him ; and, as the faculty of simple imitation gratifies their love of fleshy forms, they require from the painter no intellectual identity ; nor do they value "the mind, the music breathing from the face."

Such are the men who rave about the productions of Valentin.

Valentin, one of the most celebrated masters of the French school, was born at Coulommiers, in the province of Brie, on the 8th of June, 1601. Why some of his biographers should have claimed for him a place in the Italian school of artists we know not ; for, in addition to the fact of his being a

Frenchman by birth, his genius displayed itself long before he drew his inspirations from the marvels of the Vatican.

There is a little uncertainty about the early life of Valentin. Some accounts state that he went to Paris that he might study under Simon Vouet; but a mere comparison of dates will show that this

THE MUSICAL PARTY. FROM A PAINTING BY VALENTIN.



is a mistake. In 1612, when Valentin was as yet only eleven years of age, Simon Vouet set out with De Sancy for Constantinople, and did not return, according to Félibien, till 1627. At that date, Valentin, who had long been domiciled at Rome, had already achieved a great reputation as a painter. Now, D'Argenville contradicts himself, when he says that Valentin gleaned the first principles of art

from Vouet, and then that Vouet borrowed his style from Valentin. If this were so, the master must have been instructed by his own pupil—a very unlikely thing. The real solution of the difficulty is, that both these painters, being at Rome at the same time, studied together the masterpieces of Caravaggio. At the time, however, when Valentin arrived in Italy, Caravaggio had just departed this life; and the influence which he had exercised during his successful career over the world of art, was already on the wane. Like many other reformers, he had deceived his contemporaries, by propping up a false system upon fine *chefs-d'œuvre*, and bad principles by good examples.

After his death there were in Rome but two factions in painting, that of Josepin and of the two Caracci, represented respectively by Dominichino and Guido. These rivals had an easy task of it; they had only to establish the fact that day was not dark, and that even the genius of Caravaggio could not excuse his contempt for the sublime and beautiful in nature, or his detestation of the light of the sun.

Valentin took up his abode in the Eternal City just as the tide of reaction had set in, a reaction which the genius of Poussin rendered quite irresistible. His master mind soon settled the dispute, and assigned to each his proper place. He described Dominichino as the greatest painter that the world had seen since the days of Raphael; but in speaking of Caravaggio, he said, "This man's mission seems to have been the destruction of the art of painting." Nevertheless, Valentin was disposed to imitate the style of Caravaggio; he had an instinctive leaning towards this master's productions, and neither the advice of Poussin, whom he both loved and admired, nor the general tendency there was in the world of art to escape from the trammels of the Lombard painter, could deter Valentin. Instinct in him was more powerful than reason.

#### "THE CONCERT."

His preference for animal development to intellectual expression, and for physical beauty to mental superiority, is apparent in all his masterpieces, and in none more than in "The Concert," which we now reproduce. This piece is in the Museum of the Louvre, and is justly esteemed by Frenchmen as an evidence of his great genius, and of the still greater excellence to which he would have attained if death, at the early age of thirty-one, had not deprived the world of art of one of its greatest ornaments. His rough but ready genius delighted in plebeian models. These were the subjects in which he found that reality which he could make palpably effective.

In his eagerness to display advantageously the muscular and fleshy developments which, in his opinion, had been too much neglected by his *confrères*, he is lavish of the light and shade which may bring into relief the full proportions of his figures, and when he is puzzled as to the way in which he shall ennoble his subject, he spreads over the whole piece a mantle of darkness, and thus invests his conception with the poetry of night.

He frequented the taverns at Rome for the purpose of studying the features and expression of the drunkards and dicers who spent their evenings in those haunts of debauchery. The face and forms of the musicians in this concert piece are thoroughly Roman, the outline regular but marked and masculine, the eyes fine and lustrous, the frames large and well proportioned, without being unwieldy or awkward.

The famous Cardinal Barberini, nephew of Pope Urban VIII., a munificent patron of artists in general and of Nicholas Poussin in particular, hearing of the merits of *Monsu Valentino*, as he was at that time called in Italy, wished to know him and extend to him the protection which he bestowed on all who had achieved any reputation in art.

Among other proofs of his favour, he commissioned Valentin to paint for him a view of Rome into which he was to introduce the Anio and the Tiber. This order our painter executed much to the satisfaction of the cardinal; and the historian Baglione informs us that in his time it was exhibited in a building which he calls the Apostolical Chancery. For the same patron Valentin executed an enormous piece, full of figures, entitled "The Beheading of John the Baptist." This painting is distinguished by that bold and enterprising spirit which the Italians call "*Gagliardamente*." His great *chef-d'œuvre*, however, is "The Martyrdom of the Two Saints, Processus and Martinienus," which is still preserved in the Vatican. There is a Caravaggio mannerism about this *chef-d'œuvre* which had at the time it was painted become the adopted style of the artist. The two sufferers are bound down

together upon an instrument of torture, and the cord which ties their feet is tightened so as to cut through their flesh, over a wheel which the executioner is turning, while his myrmidons are either scourging the martyrs or preparing red-hot irons wherewith to sear their backs. This piece of Valentin's was brought to Paris after Bonaparte's successful campaign in Italy—a campaign of which the result was to make Rome herself—Rome so long *domina rerum*—"the lady of kingdoms," the subordinate capital of a French department. At the restoration, in 1815, the conquerors recovered possession of this treasure, and it was in consequence restored to its original sanctuary in Rome. Such indeed are the singular privileges awarded to the gems of art, that they can safely traverse the world in the conqueror's train, and are often reckoned among the most glorious trophies of victory.

The popes, however, who had partly foreseen the dangers to which their art treasures would be exposed, had, by way of precaution, procured a copy in mosaic of this *chef-d'œuvre* of Valentin. This mosaic, which is the work of the celebrated Cristo Fori, is reckoned among the most precious articles of *virtu* at St. Peter's, where it is carefully preserved, together with the "Martyrdom of St. Erasmus," another mosaic after Poussin.

#### "THE GUARDSMEN."

Sacred subjects were never Valentin's forte. Notwithstanding the success of this harrowing scene of martyrdom, *tableaux de genre*, of which we have a specimen in "The Guardsmen," which we here reproduce, were far more congenial to his taste, and much better suited to his style, than religious pieces. Freedom of touch, and not beauty of conception, was the distinguishing characteristic of our artist. The painter whom even an intimacy with Poussin could not inspire with elevated sentiments, or with a more serious manner, was quite incapable of appreciating the melancholy beauty of such a subject as a Christian saint suffering martyrdom. To ask of Valentin devotional pictures, treated with becoming sanctity, was as absurd as to expect from the melancholy and pensive pencil of Lesueur the sensualities and excesses of this scene of "The Guardsmen Quarrelling."

Valentin painted for popes and cardinals the subjects selected for him by these dignitaries of the church, because it was his interest to gratify them, but when he had executed their orders he returned with renewed zest to the style which was most natural to him. Leaving to others the conventional task of painting perishing Christians and persecuting pagans, "he copied nature," says Felix Pyat, "as he found her. No Venuses for him—no gipsies—no conventional forms—no traditional outlines. His figures are those of the first comers; his arms and legs are copied from the passer-by. He eschewed gods and demigods. Itinerant musicians, soldiers, toppers, smokers, ragged beggars, low life indeed, taken at random,—these were his favourite subjects."

#### "THE MUSICAL PARTY."

At first sight this seems a brilliant assemblage of high-born, high-bred amateurs, all attired with costly elegance. Some in shining cuirasses, of whose least movement we almost fancy we hear the echoes, so vividly are they portrayed; others, with rich doublets, plumed caps, and poignards in their belts. The proud and full-blown dame, who is playing the spinette, and marking the time so pompously, has rather a vulgar appearance; but she is dressed in a manner quite in keeping with that of the rest of the company. The concert-room is well furnished with instruments and performers.

A violoncello, or bass, a guitar, a violin, a clarionette, and a spinette, are there. Nothing is wanting. Each instrument seems to lend its individual notes to the general harmony. You imagine you are in very good company; but as you look more closely into the faces of these finely-dressed people, you discover some low, coarse, bad countenances; amongst them and in the distance, certain evil and villainous physiognomies, which conjure up thoughts of the gallows and the hulks. You begin to feel a sort of distrust of this fine place and these gay people, and to associate ideas of robbery and murder with those gorgeous dresses, jewels, and weapons. It strikes you that these fine fellows may be after all nothing but highwaymen enjoying the fruits of their lawless and perilous enterprises.

There is another of Valentin's paintings also called "A Concert." This picture and its subject admit of no doubt, no question at all. It is palpably a pot-house, where the quartette is only a pre-

liminary to other and less innocent amusements. Who can mistake for gentlemanly or even respectable amateurs, those young sets with the ebrious faces and vinous noses, who are accompanying that bold songstress on the violin or guitar, while their companions are cutting great slices of pastry, or drinking out of bottles covered, like bottles of Florence oil, with a sort of basket-work?—the whole scene forming a concert, which is at best only the bad, objectionable part of a low and drunken orgie. Nor can we believe that the dishevelled songstress, who leads the quire, is, as Mrs. Candour would say, "any better than she should be."



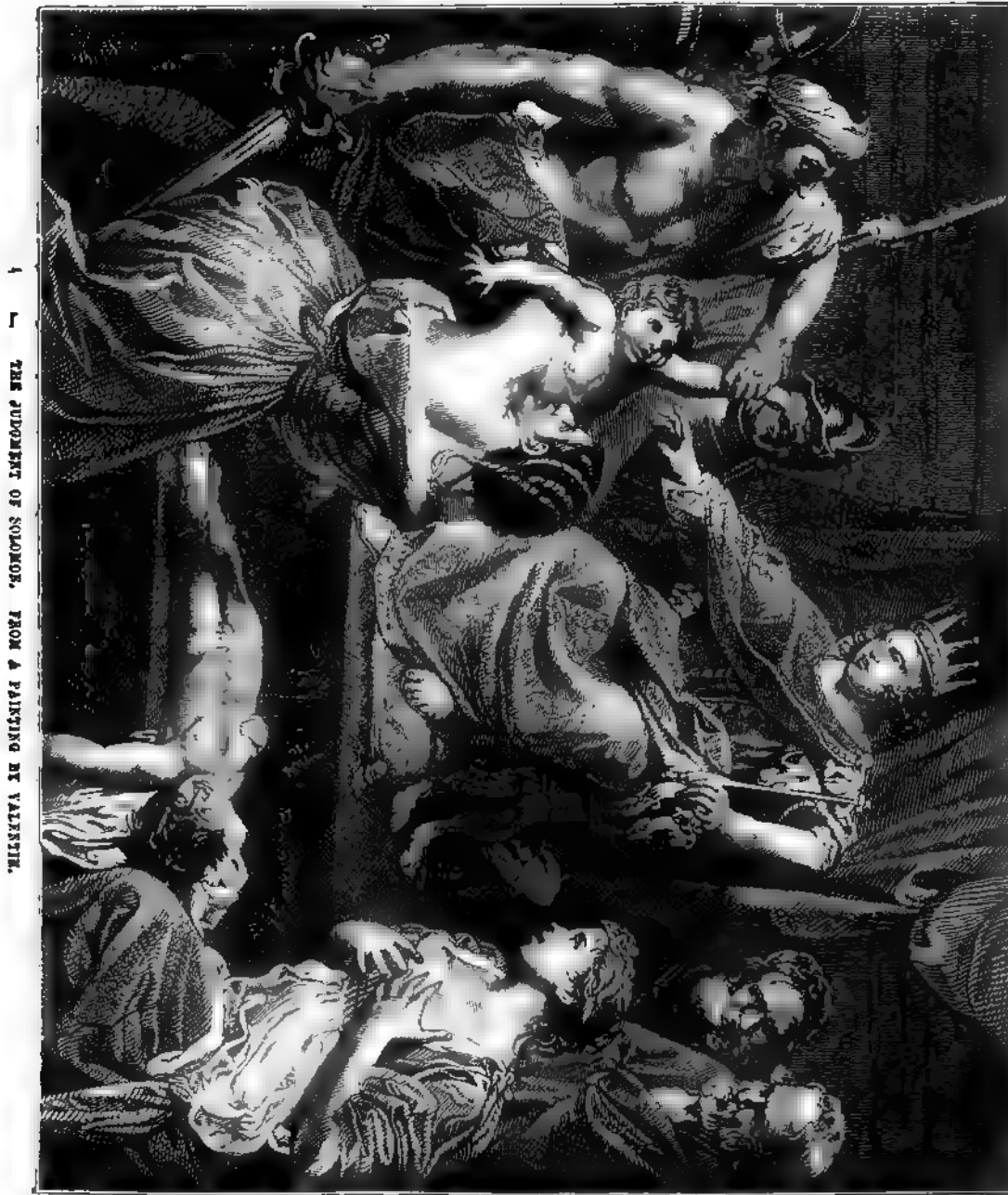
THE JUSTIFICATION OF ROMANISM. FROM A PAINTING BY VALENTIN.

And yet in spite of the drawbacks of so ill-chosen and ignoble a subject, what vigour! what life! what reality! how we are captivated by the magic of the "*chiaro-oscuro*," by sudden contrasts by the admirable grouping, the masterly drawing, the touch, the handling, the *tout ensemble*! Who would have expected to see, by the side of so courtly a knight, that female form, so clumsy and so coarse, of one who seems so little aware that, if—

"Beauty, when half-veiled, is best,  
Like her own radiant planet of the west,  
Whose beams, when half-concealed, are loveliest"—



ingliness, in its coarsest form, is better veiled altogether; and that modesty lends a grace and a dignity to the plainest woman, and is, to the eye of taste and sentiment, a charm far beyond any that a bold, vain, and shameless beauty can boast?



Moses Valentin is to the French school of painting what Caravaggio is to that of Rome, Salvator to the Neapolitan, and Gerard della Notta to the Dutch schools.

After that great epoch in the history of art, called "The Revival," and which was, in fact, only a

return to the materialism of antiquity, there were still to be found discontented spirits among artists and the patrons of art.

Michael Angelo had made of his "Day of Judgment" a great anatomical precedent, and of his *atelier* a dissecting-room. He had studied the human body as an experimental surgeon might have done. He had dissected it thoroughly and repeatedly, and had observed and mastered the play of the muscles, in every possible variety of attitude. Raphael, on the contrary, after having shared in the passions for analysis of Perugino, had gradually abandoned a cold and disenchanting study, leaving it to the followers of Cimabue to mortify the flesh, and destroy the illusions of beauty as a whole, and had himself returned to his worship of the *to kalon*. He had felt, with the great Bard of Hope, Thomas Campbell, that—

"When science from creation's face  
Enchantment's veil withdraws,  
What lovely visions yield the place  
To cold material laws."

And, after all, this grand reaction—to which the stern and ascetic Gothic school of art was sacrificed, and which if not entirely effected by Michael Angelo and Raphael, was, at least, completed by them—this reaction, we again assert, was not, in the opinion of many, sufficiently sweeping and complete.

Michael Angelo and Raphael only delighted to reproduce nature in her purest and noblest forms. The school of Caravaggio, on the contrary, admitted of no choice—no preference of which the beautiful and the sublime were the objects. That school professed to copy indiscriminately from the great gallery of nature, but seemed to prefer her coarse and revolting specimens. And certainly, as far as human beings are concerned, owing to evil passions, sin, sorrow, hardship, exposure, ignorance that degrades, and intemperance that brutalises, the ugly and coarse abound far more than the lovely and refined. This school made all the merit of the artist to consist, not in the beauty or grandeur of his subject, and the sublimity of his conceptions, but in the style, the handling, the drawing, and the finish of the execution. Little could those great lovers of the beautiful and the ideal have anticipated that second "revival" of what to them seemed the barbarous age in art—that pre-Raphaelitism, which is to painting what the spasmodic school is to poetry—a retrograde movement in an age of progress!

#### "THE JUSTIFICATION OF SUSANNAH."

It would, however, be doing Valentin an injustice to suppose that he represented nothing but rags in his favourite pieces, or that his attention was always directed to low and demoralising subjects. Although his conceptions are less grand than those of Caravaggio, and he is inferior to the Lombard master both in handling and effect, he nevertheless knew how to invest the most trivial scenes with a redeeming interest, and as he thought that the contrast of light and shade was not sufficiently arresting, he managed to increase the effect by a marked distinction in his draperies—placing side by side with the homely garments of the poor, the satin and velvet finery of the rich.

In the Louvre are pictures quite sufficient in numbers and importance to convince us of the originality and power of his genius. Among these are some which, although the subjects are nominally borrowed from holy writ, have nothing sacred about them but the name. Take, for instance, "The Justification of Susannah," from which our engraving is copied. Valentin's heroine is not one of those shrinking fair ones whose beauty imparts additional value to her modesty, and whose fascinations are difficult to resist—such a Susannah indeed as the refined and highly-cultivated Santerre painted more than a century after the date of Valentin. The heroine of the coarse but truthful production of our artist is more like a maid of all work, whose hands are red and rough with her household labour. Unconscious of any claim to the admiration of men, her modesty is without affectation, and in her simplicity she cannot quite understand why the hideous old satyrs, whose assault she has resisted, have cast an evil eye upon her. The figures of these hoary sinners are well conceived and executed. They are men in whom old age has not yet quenched desire, and they seem, notwithstanding their gray hairs and innumerable wrinkles, to be still engrossed by all the follies of their youth. The one in the foreground is endeavouring to conceal his confusion and his shame by an appearance

of anger, and while accusing Susannah, he is endeavouring to justify himself. His attitude is very expressive, and his drapery well disposed about his person. The other, whose goat-like features reveal the odious and prurient sensuousness of his disposition, forgetful alike of the soldiers who are arresting him and of the judge who is passing sentence on him, is entirely engrossed with the appearance of Susannah, whose charms awaken all his evil passions: he gazes upon her with eager and designing looks. His mouth is highly expressive, and his crown is well covered with thick and grisly hair. The head is common enough; but there is in the whole conception a vigour of touch and a correctness of tone which are almost without precedent.

Hagedorn's criticisms of Valentin are, as Emeric David has remarked, wholly unmerited. "It is not," says Hagedorn, "so much on account of his choice of subjects as his weakness of execution that we disapprove of Valentin. We should have shown him greater indulgence if he could ever have acquired the vigorous touch or the roundness of the forms of his great model." This mistake is so incomprehensible in a critic so discerning and impartial as Hagedorn, that we can only account for it by supposing that he had never seen a single production of Valentin.

#### "THE JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON."

In this splendid picture we cannot avoid being struck by the prominence given to the female figures. The youthful monarch—the wisest man that ever lived—looks insignificant when compared with them. In this respect Valentin differs widely from Poussin, who made the king his chief object; but the leading thought in Valentin's mind is evidently the mother—the mother whose child has been torn from her. This child is to be cut in two, and one bleeding half is to be handed over to her! Considering her frightful situation, we do not think horror is sufficiently depicted on the real mother's countenance; but the attitude makes some amends for this deficiency. Her eyes are not fixed on the king, but on the child she trembles to lose. Hers is the countenance of a woman incapable of falsehood, and innocence and softness characterise her beauty. How different the appearance of the mother of the dead child. Deceit, harshness, and audacity are marked upon her brow. The body of the dead child is admirably delineated, and, in the calm sleep of death, the child looks much happier than the living boy in his awfully perilous situation. The old men contrast admirably with the young mothers and the living and dead children. The athletic form of the executioner, selected for the terrible office of dividing the living infant, is boldly effective; but unless intended to represent a giant—a son of Anak—we must give it as our opinion that this figure is rather out of proportion. The handsome Jewish profile of the soldier in the background adds to the completeness of the picture; and there is much animal life and strength in the warrior *en face* at the left hand of King Solomon.

This masterpiece of art may be seen at the Louvre, with many others by the same painter.

#### "SAINT MATTHEW, THE EVANGELIST."

In this masterly picture—we had almost said portrait—of "St. Matthew" there is a grandeur of expression that is not unworthy of a Raphael, and yet an originality of thought and manner which protects Valentin from the charge of plagiarism or imitation. The marked features of the earnest, thoughtful face preserve that peculiar type by which we everywhere recognise at a glance the sons and daughters of Judah.

But in the features of "Saint Matthew," although there are traces of earthly care, there is a heavenly inspiration! Wonderfully in this sublime countenance has the painter contrived to show how Levi the Publican rose and expanded, under his Saviour's command, into Matthew the Apostle. Nothing can be finer than the attitude, or more finished than the execution of this picture. The hands are masterpieces of drawing; and even the Italian school itself can show few finer specimens of drapery. Contrasted vividly, and yet softly, with this time-worn face of the Apostle, is the seraphic beauty of the Recording Angel, who is dictating the inspired writing.

All the accessories are finished with a care which adds so much to the effect of a picture, and in the whole range of Scripture pieces, it would be difficult to find a finer and more faultless "Saint Matthew" than this by Moses Valentin.

It was the singular good fortune of Valentin, or rather of his pictures, to be much prized and praised by the great reviver of the classic school in France, Louis David; and yet in Valentin's works was to be found the first germ of that idealism which, when fully developed at a later period, brought David and his school into disrepute.

Valentin was to Nicholas Poussin and to Lesueur much what two centuries later Gericault was to David and to Prud'hon.

The traditions of Greece and Rome, which ever since "the Revival" had ruled with a rod of iron over the arts and the literature of our neighbours, had not been able completely to destroy that instinctive and energetic reality which was the foundation-stone of Gallic genius, and which showed itself in the works of Poussin in spite of all his aspirations after "the ideal."



ST. MATTHEW. FROM A PAINTING BY VALENTIN.

The Old as well as the New Testament furnished Valentin with subjects for his masterly genius. How intimate appears his acquaintance with the peculiarities of the ancient favoured race; favoured, yet alas, how fallen! How richly once was the Hebrew race endowed both physically and intellectually! Its warriors invincible! its maidens unrivalled in beauty! and then its mothers, its fond but often miserable mothers—miserable from the beginning of Bible history—from Eve, bent in anguish over the first dead man—her murdered Abel!—Rebecca, weary of life, because of the daughters of Heth; and Hannah, strong in faith, but heartstricken, tearing herself from her infant Samuel, to consecrate him for his whole life unto the Lord. Who can paint her sorrow—

"When the boy  
Lifted, through rainbow-gleaming tears, his eye  
Reverebly to hers, and half in fear



MOSES VALENTIN. FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF.



Turned from the white-robed breast, and round  
her arm

Clung e'en as ivy clings ; the deep spring tide  
Of nature then swelled high, and o'er her child  
Bending, her soul brake forth in mingled sounds  
Of weeping and sad song. 'Alas !' she cried,

" 'Alas, my boy ! thy gentle grasp is on me,  
The bright tears quiver in thy pleading eyes,  
And now fond thoughts arise,  
And silver chords again to earth have won me,  
And like a vine thou claspest my full heart.  
How shall I then depart ?

" 'How the lone paths retrace, where thou wert  
playing  
So late along the mountains, at my side,  
And I, in joyous pride,  
By every place of flowers my course delaying,  
Wove, e'en as pearls, the lilies round thy hair,  
Beholding thee so fair !

" ' And oh ! the home whence thy bright smile hath parted,  
Will it not seem as if the sunny day  
Turned from its door away,  
While through its chambers wand'ring weary-hearted,  
I languish for thy voice, which past me still  
Went like a singing rill.

" ' Under the palm trees thou no more shalt meet me,  
When from the fount at evening I return  
With the full water urn ;  
Nor will thy sleep's low tone like murmurs greet me,  
As midst the silence of the stars I wake,  
And watch for thy dear sake.

" ' And thou ! will slumber's dewy cloud fall round thee  
Without thy mother's hand to smooth thy bed ?  
Wilt thou not vainly spread  
Thine arms, when darkness as a veil hath wound thee,  
To find my neck ; and lift up, in thy fear,  
A cry which none shall hear ! "

Poor Hannah ! type of that still more deeply sorrowing mother who watched by the cross on Calvary !

The "Madre Dolorosa" has ever been a favourite subject with painters. In representing it they are sure of touching the hearts of the spectators. This, Valentin also felt confident of doing in his celebrated picture of "The Vindication of Susannah." In all his pieces illustrative of holy writ his subjects are judiciously chosen. But at times he could display wonderful talent in scenes of an entirely opposite nature. Teniers could hardly surpass some of his "Soldiers at Cards," or "Gipsy Women Telling Fortunes." Valentin possessed the popular art of representing the manners of his age, but a striking duality is observable in his mind. In his masterpieces from Scripture, you behold proofs, undoubted proofs of genius, but there is no divine inspiration in his modern subjects. Enthusiastically fond of art, he braved all dangers in search of the picturesque. The exterior of caravans and gipsies' tents did not satisfy him. He herded with the vagabonds within, and with them occasionally he pitched his tent. In this we do not hold him up as an example to young artists. No progress in art can make amends for moral contamination ; and who can associate with lawless vagrants and not be contaminated ? Valentin's contemporary, Callot, painted scenes from the same rank in life, but he did not allow his eagerness for success to lure him into similar dangers.

Levêque, on the other hand, says that Valentin knew how to blend artistically the most transparent tints of the most brilliant light with the deepest shadows. This eulogy the Italian critics have confirmed. Not only do they place Valentin far above all the imitators of Caravaggio in the art of composition, but they include him, in spite of his being a Frenchman, in the list of the masters of the Italian School, and pronounce his colouring to be at least equal to that of any of the painters whom Italy has produced.

In seizing the varying expression of the face, and tracing in the working of the features the tumult of passion in the human breast, Valentin, for a painter of first-rate reputation, was lamentably deficient.

" Tipsy shout and jollity,  
Frolic and frivolity,"

were what he alone could illustrate with fidelity in the faces and attitudes of his subjects. His inability to give expression to the features applies not only to the lines and lineaments of the face, but also to the historical and philosophical conventionalities, and the other circumstantial details of the subject. A single instance will suffice to show his great incompetence in this respect as compared with the skill of Poussin and of others. What a contrast does the "Solomon" of Valentin—smooth-faced, badly draped, thick-jointed, undignified, and unimpressive as he is—offer to that other "Solomon," so majestically clad, and yet so simple, calm, and impassive, so grand in his attitude, personifying as it were impartiality, and yet signifying the justice of the case by the mere direction of his finger, without hardly moving a muscle. An appreciation of the value of a single gesture, and of the power of action, would seem at the first blush to be the especial gift of the painter who worships the "real" in contr-

distinction to "the ideal;" and yet we learn by experience that this valuable gift is found only in philosophical painters,—in those who do not limit their observation to the outward manifestations of passion, but fathom, in addition, its secret sources in the human heart. To judge well of the effects of passion, the painter must have analysed its causes.

The excesses in which Valentin indulged cost him his life. One sultry evening, after a debauch, in which he had drunk more wine and smoked more tobacco than any of his companions, he felt so oppressed, that in passing the fountain *del Babucino*, in Spanish-place, Rome, he could not resist the temptation of springing into the cool basin with the hope of allaying the fever in his veins. A pleurisy was the penalty of his imprudence, of which he died a few days afterwards, in the year 1632, at the early age of thirty-one, in the prime of life, and at the zenith of his reputation. The manner of his death was strangely in keeping with the feverish excitement of his life, and his rough and random style of painting. Unaccustomed to husband his resources of coin or constitution, he was as much uninfluenced by the rules of routine as by the precepts of Poussin. It would have been almost impossible for a man so reckless and extravagant to keep a competence, even if his professional success had enabled him to realise one. As it was, he died so poor that he did not even leave sufficient funds for his funeral expenses, which were defrayed by Cassiano del Pozzo.

His irregular habits and his untimely death deprived him of the power of bequeathing to posterity more than a few *chefs-d'œuvre* of great merit. These, however, are reckoned among the most valuable art treasures of which France can boast, and they are for the most part preserved in the picture-galleries of his own country.

The Louvre contains eleven of them, among which the most remarkable are "The Justification of Susannah," "The Judgment of Solomon," "Christ and the Tribute Money," "A Concert," and "A Musical Party."

In England we possess but two *chefs-d'œuvre* of Valentin, one of which is in the Bridgewater House collection, and the other in Lord Northwick's gallery.

Scattered over Rome there are altogether nine "Valentines," of which the most famous is that in the Vatican, entitled "The Martyrdom of Saint Processus and Saint Martinienus."

---

## SEBASTIAN BOURDON.

---



MORE fortunate than many of his predecessors and contemporaries, Bourdon has preserved intact during the lapse of two centuries the reputation he achieved in his lifetime. The universality of his genius accounts in some measure for the general popularity of his productions. A child of the sunny south, the natural buoyancy of his character, which made him accommodate himself to circumstances,—the happy inspirations of his pencil, and even the irregular tenor of his vagabond life, are alike interesting in him. It is indeed a curious fact that this painter, who by turns imitated the style of so many of the great masters, and who has reflected on his canvas the principal features of so many schools, received his early education in the streets.

Born at Montpellier, in 1616, in the house of an artist of some repute, he was himself the son of a painter on glass. At that time there were many of the same calling in the distant provinces, and, although the race is now extinct, we owe them—skilful and industrious artists as they were—a debt of gratitude for the energy and talent with which they defended the principles of the *Renaissance*, or, in other words, of that revolution which in the fifteenth century Raphael effected in the style of painting.

Bourdon's first instructor in art was this painter on glass. An uncle, however, appreciating the

promise of the nephew, and desirous of giving him greater advantages than he possessed at home, took him with him to Paris.

In the French metropolis Bourdon studied under an artist whose name has not been recorded; and



HAIL OF THE HOLY FAMILY. FROM A PAINTING BY BOURDON.

it is more than probable that the ignorance and prejudices of the master induced the pupil to leave Paris on that tour through the southern provinces which, as we find, he commenced so early in life.

In 1630 we meet him at Bordeaux painting *al fresco*, for a new master, the arched ceiling of the



grand saloon of a castle situated in the environs of the town. From Bordeaux he went to Toulouse, but finding that the good citizens of that town were far less ready to purchase than he was to paint, he became disgusted with his unproductive art, and despairing for the moment of securing any other

HEALING THE SICK. FROM A PAINTING BY BOURDON.



means of subsistence, he enlisted. The profession of arms was of all others the one for which he was the least suited both by nature and education. The gain to the army in a recruit so whimsical and undisciplined was infinitesimally small; but the loss to the school of art of a bold and fertile genius—

of an active and enterprising hand, was proportionably great. Bourdon himself, too, lost that which he valued above everything else, even above the pursuit of his art—his liberty. He repented when it was too late, and carried his musket with so bad a grace that his captain, out of pity for his inexperience, gave him a few hours' rest. At last his friends interfered, and through their influence the unhappy painter got his discharge.

Once free, Bourdon went straight to Rome. The love of painting, which had for a moment cooled in him, became more engrossing than ever, and inspired by the hopefulness of youth—for he was only just eighteen—he set to work again with increased earnestness and energy. It was at Rome that he was destined to complete the imperfect and desultory education which he had as yet acquired only by fits and starts. The instructions he received in the great metropolis of art developed in him resources as yet unknown even to himself. He had hitherto obeyed only the dictates of his rude, uncultivated genius, and had painted at random whatever his fancy suggested. He had adopted no peculiar style or manner, and this indecision, which was part of his character, haunted him through life. The effects, indeed, of this want of self-sufficiency, or rather of a well-grounded confidence in his own powers, is discernible in all his productions, which are rather the brilliant reflections of the style of his contemporaries than the conceptions of an original genius.

Bourdon was poor, and he was in consequence hampered by the necessity of making his art subservient to the means of subsistence. War subjects, picturesque groups of gipsies and beggars, interiors of barracks and taverns, such as Peter de Laër had painted so successfully under the name of *bambochades*, were at this time all the rage in Italy; and Bourdon, although rather deficient than otherwise in the jovial spirit of these pieces, was beginning to succeed in them and to make his talent available when an unfortunate occurrence compelled him to leave Rome at a moment's notice.

Sebastian Bourdon, like many of his countrymen in the South of France, was a protestant, and his creed was of course highly detrimental to his character in the land of the inquisition. A dispute with a French painter of the name of Rieux, who owes his immortality to this circumstance, ended in his threatening to accuse Bourdon of heresy before the tribunal of the inquisition. Bourdon did not aspire to the crown of martyrdom, and as he had some knowledge of the tender mercies of the Castle of St. Angelo, he took French leave of the Eternal City.

When he was safe from the pursuit of the emissaries of the inquisition his eagerness for improvement returned, and as Venice offered him an inviting shelter he accepted for a while the hospitality of the Queen of the Adriatic. He then visited the picture galleries of some other Italian towns, and returned to France after an absence of three years. His stay in Italy had been most beneficial to him. He had acquired a rapid execution, he had watched that wonderful *improvisatore* André Sacchi at work, and he was in consequence fired with an eager desire to do much, and do it quickly, even if he could not do it well.

At the time of Bourdon's return to France the great light of the French school was Simon Vouet; and our young and aspiring artist, who had always been an imitator of his style, was in consequence in the high road to fame and fortune, as his successes would soon have proved but for another unlucky *contretemps*. At Montpellier, his native town, where he stopped for a time on his return from the south, the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral intrusted him with a commission to paint a large picture illustrative of the fall of Simon Magus. Bourdon introduced into the piece thirty figures, and in three months completed the arduous undertaking. The moment the picture was finished it was exhibited at St. Peter's Church, Montpellier. A painter, of the name of Samuel Boissière, criticised its merits so severely, that Bourdon could bear it no longer, and at last gave vent to his indignation in striking his envious rival. A scuffle ensued, which might have ended seriously if Bourdon, more cautious than courageous, had not withdrawn from Montpellier.

We next meet him at Paris, where better luck awaited him. This was the first time he had ever seen the French metropolis; but his fame must have preceded him thither, for the Goldsmiths' Company, who were in the habit of making a yearly present of a picture to the Cathedral of Notre Dame, commissioned him at once to paint for them the "Martyrdom of St. Peter." Here was an opportunity for Sebastian Bourdon to distinguish himself, which, with his experience and ambition, he was not likely to let slip. And, indeed, he made the most of it, for he painted a piece which, for style, touch, handling, freedom, and facility, was really quite a *chef-d'œuvre*. The design is perhaps a little careless for so harrowing a subject, and the colouring, which is composed of warm and reddish tints,

has an unpleasing vulgarity, which everybody censures. Moreover, the light is far from being skilfully distributed. The figures in the foreground are placed too much in advance, and the hero of the piece is deficient in that holy resignation and passive indifference to suffering which we expect to find in the martyred saint. The piece was, nevertheless, a complete success; and another painting by the same artist, which he executed with his usual rapidity, and in which he represented Mercury killing Argus, was equally well received by the public. Scudéry has added his evidence to the merits of this *chef-d'œuvre* in the following lines:—

"On thy painting, oh Bourdon, as many eyes gaze,  
As are closed in that Argus whom Mercury slays."

An honour, however, which was soon afterwards conferred upon him, proves more conclusively than even the praise of Scudéry, how rapid and universal was his success. At the foundation of the Royal Academy of Art, in 1648, the great distinction was conferred upon him of enrolling his name among the twelve ancients to whose protection this illustrious association was intrusted. Without particularising those celebrated masters, with whose names every one is familiar, Bourdon had for a colleague among the founders of the Academy a gentleman of the name of Duguernier, a famous miniature painter, whose sister he married. This Duguernier, who was a favourite at court, and had many friends, was, according to Félibien, of great service to our artist.

Very few know how to make the most of a good opportunity. Bourdon was not an exception to the general rule, for just as fortune was beginning to greet him at home with her most auspicious smiles, he went to seek her abroad.

#### "HALT OF THE HOLY FAMILY."

The Museum of the Louvre contains nine "Bourbons," and the "Halt of the Holy Family," which we here reproduce, is one of the most celebrated. This piece was valued, in the reign of Napoleon the First, at 6,000 francs, or £240; but at the restoration of the Bourbons, peace and prosperity enhanced the estimation in which the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the great masters were held, and as much as 8,000 francs, or £320, was bid for the same picture.

While the riots of La Fronde were expatriating the principal painters and poets of France, Bourdon, who, notwithstanding his cleverness, seems to have miscalculated his chances, sought an asylum at the court of Christina, Queen of Sweden. In her laudable endeavour to civilise the savages of her semi-barbarous court, she had collected around her throne a group of sages and poets. This royal lady, who, because she was really intellectual, aspired also to a reputation for a taste for the fine arts, received Bourdon most graciously, appointed him her painter in ordinary, and made him moreover the guardian of the pictures she already possessed, which, for the sake of security, she kept inclosed in wooden cases. As Bourdon's ambition was to paint new pictures, and not protect old ones, the Queen intrusted him with the difficult task of executing a likeness of herself, and the beautiful portrait of Christina, Queen of Sweden, which he produced in obedience to her commands, is the most authentic and celebrated likeness which we possess of that interesting and illustrious sovereign.

Sebastian Bourdon was a man of liberal mind and large sympathies. While he was engaged in painting the portrait of the Queen, his royal sitter entered into conversation with him on the subject of the paintings which her father had managed to secure at the sacking of the city of Prague. These pictures were still unpacked, and the Queen requested the painter to examine them, and give her his opinion upon them. Bourdon reported most favourably about them, and the generous Queen, in return for the services of her painter in ordinary, offered him the whole collection. Bourdon, however, with a disinterestedness which does him the greatest credit, reminded her that they were the most exquisite masterpieces in Europe, and that she ought not to part with them. Christina, convinced by his arguments, retained possession of her pictures, and when she eventually abdicated and became a Roman Catholic, she had them conveyed to Rome. They afterwards passed into the possession of Don Silvio Odescalche, whose heirs, at his death, sold them to the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France, and in his palace they remained up to the time of the revolution. They now form part of the art treasures of that magnificent collection known by the name of "The Bridgewater Gallery."

At Stockholm, Bourdon painted nothing but portraits; at least, so says Félibien, who was intimately acquainted with the artist. Among the number was that of Charles Gustavus, first cousin to

Christina, and the prince in whose favour she abdicated. In his "Conversations on the Lives of the most Celebrated Painters" this simple biographer informs us that the Queen of Sweden commissioned Bourdon to furnish her with a plan for the mausoleum she wished to erect to the memory of her father, Gustavus Adolphus, who was killed at the battle of Lutzen, in 1663. Félibien, in his garrulous



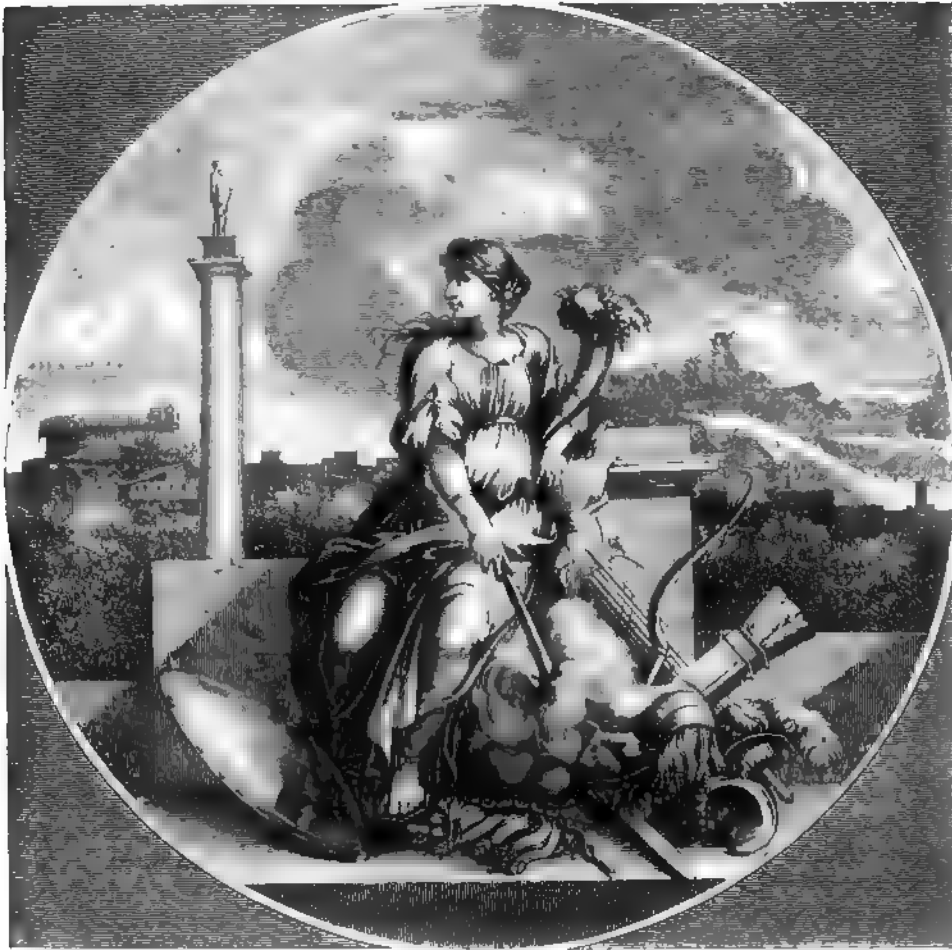
THE ARTIST'S STUDIO. FROM A PAINTING BY BOURDON.

way, describes the plan that he had himself suggested. It was, however, so intricate and impracticable, that Bourdon refused to submit it to the Queen.

His vagabond propensities would not allow him to pitch his tent for any length of time in any one place; and accordingly, when Christina, whose equestrian portrait he had just finished, intrusted him

with the delicate and difficult commission of presenting it to the King of Spain at the Escorial in Madrid, Bourdon, who had a wholesome horror of the perils of the deep, just went as far as the "Sound" on his voyage to the peninsula, and then set off for Paris. The wisdom of this move was evident from the result. The vessel which bore the equestrian portrait of the Queen was shipwrecked on her passage to the peninsula; and Christina herself, not long afterwards, abjured the protestant religion, and abdicated in favour of her cousin.

The painter, thus released from all his engagements with the court of Sweden, resumed his functions



SECURITY. FROM A PAINTING BY BOURDON.

as Professor of the Academy of Painting, and on the 6th of July, 1655, was elected a Director of the Society, with Sarrazin, Lebrun, and D'Errard for his colleagues.

#### "HEALING THE SICK."

This picture, of which our engraving is a faithful copy, is one of a series of seven called by Bourdon "Works of Benevolence." They are preserved in the Bridgewater Gallery, and are reckoned by connoisseurs as the most valuable of all Bourdon's productions. The disposition of the figures is artistic and imposing, and the "finish" of the whole is sacrificed as it ought to be to the effect of the parts.

The angel of death, is sheathing her destructive sword, and the perishing sons of Adam are reviving through the sacred ministry of the Son of Man. This piece has inspired many subsequent artists with similar conceptions, but none of them are equal to the original.

Appointed Director of the Academy of Art, our painter set to work with increased zeal and industry, and produced in rapid succession a number of immortal *chef-d'œuvre*. Without taking into account the landscapes and tavern scenes which his inexhaustible pencil was continually throwing off, he painted, for an altar-piece of the Church of St. Benoit, "Christ Dead at the Feet of the Virgin," a picture which has been universally admired. "The Woman Taken in Adultery," "Christ with Mary Magdalen," and "The Sacrifice of Solomon," were executed in rapid succession for various public buildings.

Marriette eulogises the dead Christ in the following passage: "This is his masterpiece," says he; "it is grandly conceived, and quite in the style of Luigi Caracci, who would not have been ashamed of it." Such praise from so famous a connoisseur as Marriette has great weight, and we also lay considerable stress upon the opinion he expressed concerning "The Crucifixion of St. Peter," which Bourdon painted in 1643. Marriette had in his possession two designs for that subject; they were both very rich, and much in the style of Paul Veronese. They were at first full of figures, but the painter had the good taste to simplify them; for although mere designs may look the better for a superabundance of figures, the case is quite the reverse with finished paintings. In these a multiplicity of subjects creates a confusion which is destructive of that repose so indispensable in historical pictures. Marriette's criticisms, however, prove that Bourdon instead of becoming perfect through practice, and instead of correcting his crude conceptions, as Poussin had done before him, still dashed at random on the canvas his first impressions, and improvised a new idea as fast as he relinquished an old one.

The work of greatest importance which he ever executed was the decoration of the Hotel de Bretonvilliers, in the Isle of St. Louis. On the ceiling of the grand hall of this edifice he painted in nine compartments of unequal sizes the fable of "Phœbus and Phaeton," and on the walls of partition he superintended the allegorical representation by his pupils of "The Virtues" and "The Arts," in four octagonal frames. The decorations of that splendid gallery of paintings were one of the proudest monuments of the magnificence of the seventeenth century. Unfortunately for posterity these gorgeous works of art have all perished, and unless we had had written descriptions of them, or still more palpable evidence of their existence in the engravings of Friques de Vaurose, who was Bourdon's favourite pupil, we could have given no account of them. Even at the date of the publication of D'Argenville's "Picturesque Tour," the Bretonvilliers gallery was already in ruins. Of the edifice itself not a vestige now remains.

Bourdon was, of all the painters of the French school, with the exception perhaps of Charles Lebrun, the one who through the fertility of his invention and the exuberance of his fancy, was the best suited for the difficult task imposed upon him by the proprietors of the Bretonvilliers Gallery. Bold, enterprising, and independent of all outward assistance, he yet preserved intact his reminiscences of "the grand style." He was, indeed, suited *par excellence* for the task of a decorator, in whom a readiness of conception as well as execution coupled with brilliancy of style are quite indispensable. In the decoration of a palace the artist should seek to arrest the attention and to astonish while he fascinates the eye. A design which would awaken too deep a train of thought would be out of place, as the internal sublimity of the idea would eclipse all external magnificence.

Each style has its peculiar merits. The painter whose genius enables him to give expression to the noblest sentiments of the human mind in a group of three figures, is not the man whose decorative powers would dazzle at once the imagination and the eyes. The genius of Nicholas Poussin was too grand for the gaudy task of ornamentation. Sebastian Bourdon, on the other hand, excelled in it.

It is, therefore, fortunate for the fame of our artist that the engravings of this, his most important work, have been bequeathed to us by one of his pupils. He displayed in his decorations the most brilliant attributes of his genius—exuberance of fancy, action, energy, readiness, and skill. To give life, interest, and brilliancy to such cold and unpromising subjects as "The Virtues," and "The Arts," with which he was commissioned to fill the octagonal frames, required all the resources of Bourdon's enterprising nature. And yet how well he has achieved his object. For the unsuggestive symbol he has everywhere substituted dramatic action and effect. *Music* is illustrated by the fable of Arion, who obtains from the sailors who are on the point of tossing him headlong into the sea leave to strike once

more his magic lyre. A tuneful dolphin, fascinated by the strain, bears him on his back, and deposits him in safety at Cape Tænarum. Thus genius triumphs over difficulties. The story of Arion is full of life and action. Borne on the back of his inspired dolphin, the Lesbian lyrist cleaves the waves with his living bark, and smiles at the death which the magic of his music has vanquished. Far in the distance sails the ship whence the poet was precipitated into the sea, and the artist has displayed consummate skill in imparting to this distant object a classical outline, which in less skilful hands would have vulgarised the effect of the whole piece. *Geometry* is illustrated by the history of Archimedes. *Astronomy* furnishes him with an opportunity of introducing the picture of Hadrian, who, just as he is on the point of offering up a sacrifice to Jove, is arrested by his thunderbolt, which, falling upon the altar, overturns the priest and the victim. *Magnanimity*, *Liberality*, and *Constancy* are all illustrated by historical anecdotes.

#### "PAINTING."

The art for the sake of which we have introduced all the preceding narrative, was illustrated by "The Studio of Apelles." This piece, of which our engraving, copied from the original etching, is a faithful transcript, represents Alexander giving to his painter Apelles his mistress Campaspe; and no one can deny that the exquisite piece of female loveliness, whose beauty enhances so greatly Alexander's generosity, is vastly preferable to any cold and conventional figure symbolical of the art of painting.

It is said that Bourdon's protestant zeal sometimes interfered with the execution of the orders with which he was intrusted. In his delineation of the sufferings of some Roman Catholic saints, whose martyrdom was, in his opinion, more than doubtful, he introduced a few satirical touches of very questionable taste, and received, in consequence, his dismissal from the dignitaries of the Cathedral of St. Gervais.

#### "SECURITY."

Elastic and impressionable in his style of painting—sometimes imitating the colouring of Caravaggio, sometimes adhering to the strict rules of Poussin—affecting at one period the pompous mannerism of Paul Veronese, and at another the natural elegance of Simon Vouet—Sebastian Bourdon adapted to different subjects an entirely different style. He could paint interiors of barracks after the manner of Michael Angelo, and gipsy scenes in the spirit of Lenain or of Callot. And these little pieces which he improvised with such readiness, were always greatly preferred to his studied compositions. In fact, Bourdon succeeded admirably in *bambochades*, although he had very little of that jovial spirit which inspired the Dutch painters. His colouring is always in harmony with his subject, and therefore attractive; and his backgrounds consist of that beautiful gray which connoisseurs so much admire. Such *bambochades* were far more congenial to Bourdon's taste than the stiff, symbolical figure of "Security," which we here reproduce. The landscape is the best part of the piece, for in this the affectation of "the grand style" is not so offensively conspicuous. But the symbolical figure, with her cornucopia in one hand, while with the other she fires the emblems of war at her feet, is uninteresting and uninspired.

#### "THE VIRGIN AND CHILD."

Bourdon's engravings in aquafortis have always been highly esteemed, and connoisseurs consider that they ought to rank in the collections of picture-fanciers with the similar productions of the greatest masters. If, however, the truth must be told, these aquafortis engravings, however admirable they may be in the eyes of amateurs, who trace in them happy conception, inspiration, and deep thought, can never be palatable to those men who have derived their notions of excellence from the beautiful engravings of Baroque, the Caracci, and Benedetti. Mere scratches, when they are indicative of genius, produce unexpected effects; but large plates, hacked as it were with a sabre, are anything but pleasing. This deficiency in care and finish does not harmonise with the style of the figures, and becomes still more offensively obvious when the artist has taken the trouble of choosing dignified forms and noble attitudes.

Bourdon's deficiencies are, in this respect, quite unpardonable. His heads are often artistically conceived and gracefully turned; and his Madonnas are delicately pretty, as we see in this engraving

of "The Virgin and Child;" but the adjustment of their drapery betrays a lamentable carelessness. The folds of the garments never seem to fit the human form. No one would wish to see the raiment sticking like wax to the person; but without running into the opposite extreme, Bourdon might have displayed to more advantage the roundness of the female shape, and have made the folds dependent on the graceful undulations. An aquafortis engraving admits of no superfluous lines or shadows, and



THE VIRGIN AND CHILD. FROM AN ENGRAVING BY BOURDON.

rigid adherence to this rule is in consequence more necessary than in a painting. There is in the draperies of Bourdon's engravings that same stiff metallic appearance for which Albert Durer has been so much blamed. His Virgin even in the engraving which we here reproduce, because it is one of the least exceptional, seems clothed in buckram. His backgrounds, however, and his trees are touched off with much skill and lightness, and are the best part of the engraving of "The Virgin and Child."



## "THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT."

Bourdon's landscapes are perhaps the most perfect of all his productions. Connoisseurs all agree in their appreciation of such pieces as "The Flight into Egypt," a subject he has painted over and over again, and always successfully. Nature, wild and majestic, as he has represented her,



THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT. FROM AN ENGRAVING BY BOURDON.

seems to dispute the palm with the grandeur of the subject; and yet Bourdon flourished at a time when the beauties of nature were as yet unappreciated by the painters of France. The landscape was but an accessory, and used only as the means of bringing the figures prominently forward. No members of the Royal Academy, with the exception of Lenain, would at that time have dreamed of making his landscape anything but an imaginary composition, invented for the

purpose of serving as a theatre for one of those dramas, fictitious or real, with which the history of the human race abounds.

Bourdon was perhaps less tempted than any contemporary artist to emancipate himself from the routine of the French School; and indeed his landscapes are altogether imaginary, the promptings of his wild and wayward fancy. These pieces represent fiery chargers tearing across the plain, brigands carrying off the body of the traveller they have murdered and pillaged, startled wayfarers and fugitive horsemen. Sometimes he introduces Italian muleteers, who are threading their way in company through narrow defiles, but in most instances it is the Holy Family who are traversing the country, and escaping from the murderer of the innocents to that distant region which rises like a feathery cloud above the line of the horizon. But in spite of the occasional introduction of figures, the scenes of all Bourdon's landscapes are uninhabited and uninhabitable, though occasionally diversified by a sprinkling of ruins here and there, which seem quite out of keeping with the character of the country. His landscapes are, in fact, deserts, not the deserts which Lesueur so loved to illustrate,—

“ Where Melancholy, silent maid,  
With downcast eyes and pensive mien,  
Holds undivided sway.”

No! Bourdon's deserts are rugged wastes, the sport of earthquakes,—scenes of chaotic confusion, torn by the conflict of the elements, or echoing the roar of the waters and the whistling of the winds.

Even where the labours of the husbandman are the subject of his pencil, and when either seed-time or harvest, tilling or reaping is the burden of his piece, his rural figures have a strange bearing suggestive of the simplicity of the earliest times, and unlike anything in nature with which our experience has made us acquainted. Bourdon, moreover, in giving his fancy full swing, is often guilty of geographical inaccuracies and of anachronisms in the costume of his historical characters. More than once has he been known to introduce the vegetable productions of one hemisphere into a landscape of which the site is in another; and in one of his Italian pieces he has shaded the scene with the date trees of Bialdulgerid! His carelessness seems often the result of ignorance, for much of his foliage belongs to no recognised production of the vegetable kingdom. But even these inaccuracies or singularities have a certain fascination. They furnish imitators with grotesque forms and romantic scenery, and are often very attractive to those who to the “real” prefer “the *beau-ideal*.”

One of the most characteristic traits of Bourdon's character as a painter was his taste for architecture; and in this respect he resembled Poussin. But the difference between the two lies in the use which the Norman painter made of what the other abused.

Taillasson, in his remarks upon Bourdon's style, says, “One of the distinguishing features of nearly all the pieces of this master, both in his paintings and engravings, is the introduction in the foreground of some architectural ruins, which always consist of circles contrasted with squares. If the straight lines predominate, they are diversified by the shattered fragments of a column. If his upright figures require the variation of one or more in a stooping or sitting posture, he improvises as a pedestal a fragment of a wall, which rises from the ground at his bidding.”

This variation of forms has a picturesque effect; but the constant repetition of it is fatiguing, and moreover, it destroys the illusion by depriving the scene of an appearance of reality. Sometimes, however, the introduction of architectural fragments is not for the purpose of varying the monotony of right lines, or of redeeming the formality of objects either too round or too angular. But even when architectural buildings are introduced for their own sake, his edifices, which are always imaginary, have the same fantastic singularities which we have noticed as distinguishing his landscapes and historical subjects. A composition of this kind entitled “Magnificence,” which shared the fate of the Bretonvilliers Gallery, but which has been bequeathed to us in the form of an engraving by Bourdon himself, or one of his pupils, was the most characteristic the artist ever conceived. Artemisia, surrounded by her ladies in waiting, is mournfully gazing at the tomb which she has erected to the memory of her husband Mausolus. In this monument of the Carian queen's inconsolable grief, the painter has displayed extraordinary powers of invention. It is certainly not copied from any mausoleum of either the ancient or the modern world, and could never have had any existence but in the brain of the artist. Three distinct orders of architecture are confounded together in the strange con-

ception, and the whole is surmounted by a pyramid which, on its four facings, presents four staircases leading from the base of the cone to the apex. From the four angles of the edifice issue four prancing steeds, whose spirit as many grooms are endeavouring to curb.

During the latter years of his life Bourdon worked with indefatigable industry. The author of the "Dictionary of the Fine Arts" has asserted that he painted in a kind of garret, to which he was often confined for months without once leaving it. He there covered whole roods of canvas with a rapidity that astonished his contemporaries, so untiring was his energy, and so inexhaustible were his imaginative resources. Louis XIV., perceiving that time had not yet impaired his powers, intrusted him, in conjunction with Nicholas Loir, once his pupil, and now his rival, with the decorations of several halls in the Palace of the Tuileries. But the undertaking was too much for Bourdon. An attack of malignant fever, in the month of May, 1671, was fatal to him. He died after a few days' illness, at the age of fifty-five. He was still Director of the Academy at the time of his death.

Bourdon had several daughters, who achieved some celebrity as miniature painters. His pupils, unfortunately for themselves, adhered too closely to the random recollections their master had brought with him from Italy. The most remarkable were Nicholas Loir, who, in his colouring, surpassed even Bourdon; and Friques de Vaurose, a professor of anatomy in the Academy of Art. To him we are indebted for the excellent engravings we have of the works of his master.

### HIS MERITS.

Félibien, who was an intimate friend of Bourdon, speaks with enthusiasm of the amazing rapidity of his pencil, and of the fire which inspired him in youth and in manhood. A writer, however, who was also a great admirer of Bourdon, expresses his dissatisfaction at the unfinished state of many of his pictures. He mourns over the want of that habitual regularity and persevering industry which inspires a man with courage to perfect what his imagination has suggested. It is, however, more than probable that too much attention to routine would have cramped his imaginative power, without correcting his defects. Félibien declares that his first conceptions, and the pieces upon which he bestowed the smallest amount of labour, were generally better than those which he endeavoured to render perfect. The reason the critic assigns for this is, that the resources of his imagination supplied him with sufficient material to satisfy the eye; but that when he endeavoured to work out his idea, he was hampered, and could not carry it as far as he intended. And thus it was that injudicious labour rather obscured than elucidated his primary impressions. This peculiarity was most remarkable in his portraits. The more care he took to finish a head, and the more he laboured to render it like the original, the farther he was from the end he had in view. Imperfect in his knowledge of his art, his random touches were labour lost.

So great, however, was his power of improvising pictures, that once upon a time he laid a bet that he would paint a dozen heads, as large as life, in one day. He won the wager by performing the arduous feat within the appointed time. His historian adds, moreover, that these twelve heads were some of the best productions that ever issued from his *atelier*. There can be no doubt that his wonderful fertility of conception and readiness of execution were partly owing to the retentiveness of his memory. Bourdon had seen everything, and had forgotten nothing. His head was like the gallery of an experienced picture fancier—a complete *répertoire* of the finest pieces of the first masters. But his memory, though it aided him in rapidity of execution, was not always conducive to success. In that series of paintings entitled "The Seven Works of Benevolence," which now form part of the Bridgewater Collection, there are many evidences of plagiarism. He has levied contributions in their composition, not only from Raphael and Poussin, but from Hannibal and Louis Caracci. The galleries of Bologna and Venice have furnished many of his figures, and much of his scenery. But we must do him the justice to say that, although he borrowed unscrupulously from every available source, he was so skilful in his mode of appropriating the property of other people, that he often improved upon the original idea. The figures, gestures, attitudes, scenery, with which his retentive memory is crowded, he blends together with so much ingenuity, that they seem to form a natural, an integral part of the inspiration of his piece. He stamps as it were with his own image the ingots he has stolen from various sources, and issues from his own mind a new coinage of the whole Italian currency.



SEBASTIAN BOURDON. FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF.



Between Sebastian Bourdon and Nicholas Poussin the difference, though apparently small, is really important. It is the difference between genius and talent. Invention, energy, and memory are all, no doubt, valuable accessories in the painter; but they are as nothing when compared with that *Divine particula aura*, which is innate, and can never be acquired. "Genius," says Poussin, "is that golden branch described by Virgil, which they alone can pluck whose hand destiny directs." This golden branch Sebastian Bourdon never possessed, and in consequence he failed to reach the highest rank in the scale of art. Exuberance of fancy and fertility of invention, without judgment to guide them, produced a confusion of ideas, which, like a multitude without a master, were often at cross purposes.



J. B. OUDRY. FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF.

## JEAN BAPTISTE OUDRY.

There is a splendid portrait of this great master in that fine edition of La Fontaine's Fables, which was illustrated by Oudry himself. The expression of his noble countenance is at once tranquil, benevolent, and eminently intellectual. This portrait was painted by Largillière, and exquisitely

engraved by Tardieu. It is a thoroughly French face, and is perhaps a little too florid, and too full for perfect beauty, but in its fine and pliant features, imagination and shrewdness are blended with amiability, and it seems to announce that the possessor of this happy physiognomy was at peace with himself and with all man and womankind, and that he was upright without harshness, and more remarkable for quickness of perception than for depth of reflection.

The peaceful life of Oudry is written in this tranquil countenance, and without having even seen the original, one can answer for the fidelity of the copy. During a life of more than sixty



years long, Jean Baptiste Oudry was (luckily for him) exempt from all the agitations, struggles, and anxieties that generally throng the uphill road to the Temple of Fame. There are few of the sons of genius who have not had to contend either with the horrors of poverty, the prejudices of their families, or, worse still, the ever haunting, vague, and secret misgivings as to their own powers, which generally assail the most gifted; perhaps because extreme sensibility so often accompanies true genius.

Oudry escaped all these trials from without and from within. Son of a picture-dealer, he was born and bred in the midst of masterpieces that were constantly being restored and re-varnished by his father in his presence; and the same *chef-d'œuvre* by which the father made his fortune were the first instructors of the son. The effect of the paintings by which Jean Baptiste Oudry was surrounded in his earliest years showed itself in a precocious taste and talent for drawing. Oudry (the father), who was a member of the Academy of Art, had been a painter before he became a picture-dealer, and of course he instructed his son in the rudiments of drawing; but he very soon decided on placing him as a pupil with De Serre, painter of the king's galleries at Marseilles, who took him with him to that city. Oudry had but little of the vastness and sublimity of conception requisite in historical paintings, but he was a keen observer of nature, saw everything at a glance, and drew what he saw with the greatest accuracy.

He possessed all the qualifications necessary for a portrait-painter, but not in that style of high art in which the dignity of individual character and the sublime recollections awakened by the men and women represented, almost all of whom were distinguished for genius, merit, birth, or accidental importance of some kind, gave to their portraits an interest and grandeur akin to that of historical pictures. Such were the portraits of Velasquez, of Vandyck, and of Sir Thomas Lawrence. Oudry's style of portrait-painting was humbler, more domestic, and familiar. His portraits were not only as mirrors to those who sat for them, and for their friends striking likenesses (often too literal to be pleasant), "making the cold reality too real," but also for amateurs and disciples a close and wholesome study.

De Serre's pupil returned to Paris, led by a sort of instinct to the studio of a master after his own heart,—namely, Nicholas de Largillière. He was a true painter. And how fortunate was that young artist, who, in his school, could so easily acquire the art of placing his model in a graceful attitude and a favourable light, of adjusting his drapery with ease and taste, and of painting him with a broad, free touch, and in a style of colouring fresh and true as that which

"Nature's own cunning hand puts on."

Under the care of Largillière Jean Baptiste Oudry acquired such renown (and so well deserved it too) that Peter the Great, during his stay in Paris, in 1717, sat for his portrait to Oudry, and was so delighted with it that he became very anxious that Oudry should accompany him to St. Petersburg—just as in Holland he had carried away in his suite the carpenter of Saardam. To escape the imperial clutches and protect himself from the flattering, but inconvenient favour of the czar, Oudry, who had no wish to exchange

"The vine-covered hills and the valleys of France"

for the frozen skies and snowy plains of Russia, concealed himself in some retreat, to which he gave no clue, and where he was hidden from every eye.

Largillière, who was not merely a portrait-painter, took great delight in imparting to his pupil those great principles of art which he had himself acquired from a close study of nature, and of the old Flemish masters. He had revealed to him his discoveries in aerial perspective, in *chiaro-oscuro*, and particularly in colouring. Oudry never forgot these valuable lectures; and it was delightful to hear him repeat his conversations with Largillière.

One day the master told his pupil that he must paint flowers. Oudry went into the garden and brought thence a bouquet composed of every bright variety of hue. Largillière sent him back to select the choicest specimens of flowers all purely white. He placed them himself on a light background, which, on the shady side, threw them boldly into relief, while on the other they were detached by light neutral or demi-tints.

Largillière then compared the white paint on his palette with the bright light on the flowers (which were less brilliant), and proved to Oudry (his pupil) that in this group of white buds and blossoms, such lights as admitted of being touched with pure white, were very few in number

compared with the amount of demi-tints. This was the great secret of the roundness of the bouquet; and the painter wisely drew this deduction from the study of this bunch of white flowers,—namely, that to give relief and rotundity to an object, and to raise it and detach it from the background, the neutral or demi-tints must be broad, the bright lights few and concentrated, and that some very dark brown touches must be introduced in the centre of the shades, and in those parts that do not reflect any neighbouring object and borrow its hue. Thus did this worthy man and excellent master, Nicholas Largillière, reveal by degrees to his pupil Jean Baptiste Oudry the great secrets of his art.

Colouring was the object of his constant attention; and it was by the most striking examples that he instructed Oudry how to discover first the local tones and tints of the object, and then to vary and modify them according as they were affected by surrounding objects. "Examine this silver goblet," said Largillière, one day to Oudry. "It is certain that, on the whole, it is white; but how will you decide on the proper sort of white to give it in painting? You can only do it by contrasting and comparing it, not to things most unlike, but to those most like itself, since it is, as it were, merely a question of a shadow of a shade. If you place beside this silver goblet the whitest linen, satin, paper, or china, you will easily perceive that the white of the goblet bears no resemblance to that of the linen, the satin, the paper, or the porcelain; and in ascertaining positively what sort of white it is *not*, you will perhaps ascertain what sort of white it is."

On another occasion, speaking of those masses of shade, for the exaggerated depth of which there is no excuse, particularly in scenes that represent an open level country, where the clouds, as they sail over the azure sky, form the only shadows of the picture, he indulged in many a joke at the expense of that intense and *outré* black in which people, draperies, terraces, and many other objects are wrapped as in a pall; while the figures in the middle distance, suddenly lighted up, are, by comparison, as a group of Europeans by the side of one of Sepoys!

After five years, spent most profitably in Largillière's studio, Oudry became favourably known to the public, and that through the medium of a few good portraits and some promising historical paintings. But as yet he was ignorant as to where his real and great strength lay. He was feeling his way to fame.

Oudry's first productions secured his election as Member and Professor of the Academy of St. Luke. But high art was not his forte, nor did he devote himself to it for any great length of time. One day that he had painted a sportsman with his dog, Largillière said, laughingly, to him, "You'll never be anything but a painter of dogs." Oudry considered these words as a prophecy—they were to him a horoscope.

He devoted himself from that time principally to the study of animals, and succeeded admirably in his paintings of them. As yet, however, he had not entirely given up historical painting, and he was admitted to the Academy in 1717 upon the strength of a picture representing "The Adoration of the Magi," painted for the Chapter House of St. Martin-des-Champs. The subject of his admission picture was "Plenty."

It would be very difficult to find out what became of these early efforts of Oudry, and one is justified in supposing they were not of the highest order of merit, since the fame Oudry acquired in another branch of art so completely eclipsed that he had earned as an historical painter. It is as a painter of animals *alone*, that Oudry ranks as a great master.

He was already eminent when he was appointed Professor of Painting, with a pension from the king, and apartments in the Tuilleries. Oudry's talent was exactly of the kind to delight Louis XV., who considered the chase as more important than any business of the state. Louis XV. was inspired with such enthusiasm by the works of Oudry, that he would spend many successive hours in his studio. It is on record that the king watched Oudry paint several hunting-pieces, which were to be worked afterwards in Gobelin tapestry, and which were intended by his Majesty for his own bed-chamber in the Palace of Compiègne and for the council room; for this monarch wished to associate the great pleasure of his life with what he always found its greatest bore. The chase was his delight, and the government his abhorrence.

A very graphic description of these pictures is to be found in a paper called the *Mercur de France*, published in 1738. The king was represented accompanied by his courtiers, his guards, and his huntsmen; now drawing on his riding-boots—now in at the death of the antlered king of the forest.

This last subject formed a very effective and animated picture. - In the foreground the hounds were bounding over the corn-riggs, and treading down the bluebells and poppies. A little farther on, a party of huntsmen were crossing the river Oise in a ferry-boat. The Beaumont passage boat, full of passengers, goes slowly up the river; while other vessels sail about on purpose (as it were) to break up the monotony of the straight lines formed on the water by the ferry and passage boats. The king's



THE ROEBUCK AT BAY. FROM A PAINTING BY J. B. OUDRY.

chariot and four, and the view of Compiègne, complete the effect and the composition of this interesting and characteristic painting.

Louis was so delighted with the figure he cut in Oudry's pictures, that he invited the artist to share in the pleasures of the great Fontainebleau hunting parties. His quick perception enabled him to seize at once the natural play of the muscles, thaws, and sinews of the hounds hurrying on in the



excitement of the chase, and thus to give a striking reality to his likeness of each particular dog; so much so, that the king, seeing them each and all so well and faithfully reproduced on Oudry's canvas, took a kind of childish delight in recognising them one after the other, and calling each by his name.

Oudry soon achieved not only a national but a European reputation. Foreign princes vied with



THE WOLF IN A FOX. FROM A PAINTING BY J. B. OUDRY.

each other in their anxiety to procure his masterpieces. The King of Denmark invited him to Copenhagen; the Duke of Mecklenburg ordered a gallery to be built expressly for the reception of the *chefs-d'œuvre* of this popular master. Great as is the merit of his hunting-pieces, his fame does not depend upon them alone. In his day, landscapes were all the rage in France, and many amateurs, aware of the versatility of Oudry's talent, gave him orders for landscapes. Lafont de Saint-Jenne, in

his criticism upon the exhibition of 1746, is enthusiastic in his praises of Oudry's performances in this style; and to the public estimation in which they were already held, he adds his own personal weight. "Nothing can be more admirable," says he, "than the choice of subjects in Oudry's landscapes. In these pieces, nature, arrayed in all her simple and rustic loveliness, is invested with a charm for which we seek in vain in the palaces of kings. We feel—we almost inhale, the refreshing breeze that plays beneath the impervious shade of those clustering trees, whose foliage is so real, and of which the artist has so skilfully varied the tone, touch, tint, and leaf. This freshness, which gives such a character to the landscape, is owing to the judicious distribution of the water—smooth and glassy in one place, rippling and ruffled in another. His inventive pencil conjures up beauty out of everything; the ruined bridge, the mill, the cottage, and the cabin, invest with the charm of the picturesque a familiar scene." Such great and universal success made the fortune and the fame of the painter. But in recording Oudry's numerous triumphs, we are puzzled to give any account of the whereabouts of his masterpieces. In the Louvre there are but seven paintings, of moderate dimensions, by this prolific master. The most remarkable is

"THE ROEBUCK AT BAY."

Oudry was indefatigable. He was one of that galaxy of masters who sprang into existence about the beginning of the eighteenth century, and whose whole lives were devoted to the cultivation of their art. Not satisfied with contributing to one single exhibition fifteen pieces, he was in the habit of going every day into the country for the purpose of sketching from nature, and passed almost all his evenings in tracing outlines of future paintings.

An enthusiastic admirer of nature, this pupil of Largillière was one of the first masters of any eminence who ventured to rebel against those conventional types which already abounded in the French school. It was in nature alone that he sought for a truthful representation of the ways, habits, and expression of his animals. Like Jouvenet, he made frequent journeys to Dieppe, for the purpose of discovering the exact tint and tone of the fishes' scales at the moment they were caught. With a patience quite inexhaustible, he copied all the inmates of the *Jardin des Plantes* at Paris, and whenever any rare bird was added to the collection, his own *répertoire* was enriched with another specimen. The study of all these natural history subjects, which so greatly increased his own resources, was not unproductive to others. His agreeable manners, his cultivated mind, and, more than all, his connection with the court, gave Oudry great weight at the Academy. His addresses, which were always eloquent and impressive, were delivered in a pleasing voice, and with graceful action.

At the meeting of the Academy on the 7th of June, 1749, he read before the members, over whom Coypel then presided, an address, entitled, "Reflections upon the Advantages of Studying Colour by Contrasting one Object with Another." While attributing to Largillière the credit of the original suggestion, he explained in a simple, original, and winning manner all that his master had taught him on the subject of colour and the harmony of tone, illustrating at the same time the infinite variety which the gradations of light can supply, and just glancing at the difficult question of *chiaro-oscuro*. Viewed as a literary production, this address belongs rather to the seventeenth than to the eighteenth century, and, in the absence of all authentic details of Oudry's life, we should conclude from this document that the predilections of the painter were rather with the century which preceded him than with that in which he himself lived. His address is, on the whole, better than a mere literary composition—it is a most edifying example of modesty and pious veneration. Himself a most accomplished painter, well versed in all the minutiae of his art, he on every occasion relinquishes his own claim to give his master the opportunity of speaking.

The principle upon which Oudry the most insists, and which he has illustrated in this piece of "The Roebuck at Bay," is, that the whole of the composition should take its tone from the background, and that before the artist sketches in the groups of figures, or colours them, he should have made up his mind upon what background they are to stand. This point settled, he recommends a careful study of the living objects from nature with a canvas of the same tint as the proposed background stretched behind the model, so that the figures may stand out in full relief from it, as we see in the case of the flying roe. There is great spirit, action, energy, and reality in the whole of this group. The insatiable fury of the attacking hounds is well exemplified in the blood-thirsty perseverance with which they hang upon the quarters of the roe. "If," says he in his address, "I had to introduce a

figure by way of contrast on a sky of clear blue, I should require that the background of the canvas should be of this same transparent colour."

The background in painting is indeed the basis of all subsequent operations. It is in the sister art what the key in which the performer has to sing is in music. The painter who does not act upon this principle will soon be in the same predicament as the musician who, after composing a piece in the major key, should attempt to play it in the minor.

In impressing upon his audience the importance of attending to these principles, which he has himself so well illustrated in "The Roebuck at Bay," he always gave the credit of his observations to his instructor, Largillière; and if the pupil was proud of his master, the master, in his turn, had good reason to be proud of a pupil who had derived such profit from his lessons.

That instinct of self-preservation which Somerville, in the following graphic description, tells us is so strong in the roebuck and the hare, has not availed the former at the most critical moment of his existence.

"Nor will it less delight the attentive sage,  
To observe that instinct which unerring guides  
The brutal race; which mimics reason's lore,  
And oft transcends. Heaven-taught, the roebuck swift  
Loiters at ease before the driving pack,  
And mocks their vain pursuit. Not far he flies,  
But checks his ardour till the streaming scent  
That freshens on the blade provokes their rage.  
Urged to their speed, his weak deluded foes  
Soon flag fatigued; strained to excess each nerve,  
Each slackened sinew fails: they pant, they foam.  
Then o'er the lawn he bounds—o'er the high hills  
Stretches secure, and leaves the scattered crowd  
To puzzle in the distant vale below.  
'Tis instinct that directs the jealous hare  
To choose her soft abode. With step reversed,  
She forms the dazzling maze; then, ere the morn  
Peeps through the clouds, leaps to her close recess.  
As wandering shepherds on the Arabian plains  
No settled residence observe, but shift  
Their moving camp—now on some cooler hill,  
With cedars crowned, court the refreshing breeze,  
And then below, where trickling streams distil  
From some penurious source, their thirst allay,  
And feed their fainting flocks—so the wise hares  
Oft quit their seats, lest some more curious eye  
Should mark their haunts, and, by dark, treacherous wiles,  
Plot their destruction; or, perchance, in hopes  
Of plenteous forage near the ranker mead  
Or matted blade, wary and close they sit.  
When spring shines forth—season of love and joy—  
In the moist marsh 'neath beds of rushes hid,  
They cool their boiling blood. When summer suns  
Bake the cleft earth, to thick, wide, waving fields  
Of corn full-grown they lead their helpless young;  
But when autumnal torrents and fierce rains  
Deluge the vale, in the dry, crumbling bank  
Their forms they delve, and cautiously avoid  
The dripping covert; yet when winter's cold  
Their limbs benumb, thither, with speed returned,  
In the long grass they skulk, or shrinking creep  
Among the withered leaves, thus changing still,  
As fancy prompts them, or as food invites.  
But every season carefully observed,—  
The inconstant winds, the fickle element,  
The wise, experienced huntsman soon may find  
His subtle various game, nor waste in vain  
His tedious hours, till his impatient hounds,  
With disappointment vexed, each springing lark  
Babbling pursue, far scattered o'er the fields."

Certain it is that all colours are relative, and that an object apparently white on grass would assume a yellowish tint on snow.

Our artist's observations respecting objects conventionally called white are invaluable to the student. One of Oudry's pupils gives us the substance of his views on this head in the following anecdote:—

The subject was flower-painting. Some specimens were procured by the pupil. Those, of the most brilliant and well-contrasted colours were chosen, as furnishing the best studies for instruction.



THE STARTLED FOAL. FROM A PAINTING BY J. R. OUDRY.

But Oudry, a true disciple of Largillière, told his pupil to procure a nosegay of white flowers. When this was done, he ordered, as his master had done on a similar occasion, a light background, and very soon made it evident that these white flowers were decidedly brown on the shaded side, and that even the side exposed to the light must, as compared to the background, be rendered by faint demi-tints. Of course, here and there touches of pure white were necessary; but the master proved that in this bridal bouquet the flowers requiring these touches were few in number.

The liberal use of broad half tints are the painter's best resource. Let these be judiciously used

by those who wish to give roundness to their objects and to conjure up substance with the magic powers of shade.

However, these remarks relate only to a circumscribed number of objects. Oudry's instructions (as applicable to tints, demi-tints, and colours) have a much wider signification. He considered that

THE STAG HUNT. FROM A PAINTING BY OUDRY.



contemporary painters were very generally in fault in their distribution of light. Not satisfied with discovering the error, he was enabled to point out its cause.

It is clear he condemned the practice of placing (as copies) at the same distance from the eye those objects that are to be variously situated in the picture, giving them afterwards their respective tone and colouring by guess work. True, the painters who acted thus had a kind of quack remedy for

errors they need not have committed. When the colouring of this distant object was evidently too strong and too bright, they endeavoured to *distance* it by a light pale blue coating; but this contrivance could never make amends for the correct conception of objects that would have been acquired by placing them in the first instance at the right angle, and enabling them to receive those soft, undulating tones which must be seen to be properly appreciated.

Oudry, who closely followed his master, Largillière, disapproved of the massive black foreground in which painters are so much in the habit of introducing objects, and of rendering them nearly as black as the foreground itself. And what is the consequence? When human figures are introduced in the middle distance, and represented in tints true to nature, they are, when compared to the individuals the painter may have placed in the foreground, as Englishmen to negroes.

A dark mass for the front, a light middle ground, and grays for the distance, are good rules to give the young artist, just to furnish him with something to stand upon. But whatever the student starts with, he must remember that Nature should be his ultimate master, and that according to the closest examinations of the works of nature, of its effects and combinations, he must alter, efface, or retain anything acquired by mere general rules, which can avail him only to a certain point.

These hints, principally derived from Oudry himself, are worthy of serious attention. They indicate much observation and quickness of perception, and that daring spirit which generally characterises true talent; for we doubt whether Raphael himself does not belong to the category of painters who have sinned in injudicious disposal of lights and shades.

We must now turn to the consideration of Oudry as a painter of animals. Here he seems to have been enamoured of his art. What truth in the physiognomy of each quadruped! what *naïveté*, charms, and grace in the grouping! To each race Oudry gives its distinguishing characteristics, to every brute-countenance its true expression. And how did Oudry acquire this familiarity with the dumb creation? Certainly not from books. These are, of course, necessary in the study of painting; but the touches that give perfection are executed by those who go to the fountain head. We behold Oudry patiently copying, or rather taking the portraits of the animals at the Jardin des Plantes, then making a particular study of hunting dogs, and introducing every variety in his collection.

#### "THE WOLF IN A FIX."

In this masterpiece the fierce animal, attacked on every side, and threatened from behind by a fourth enemy, who forms the rearguard of the conquering rabble, turns round his head in impotent rage and fear. The wolf's head is a wonderful production; the action and attitude of the dogs are life-like. They are, indeed, all painted to perfection, and with a skilful touch that represents even the dappled glories of their coats. Nothing, however, in this world is altogether perfect; to give a very feeble translation of the old adage—*nil est ab omni parte beatum*; and as the sun has his spots, so even this masterpiece has its shortcomings. There is a want of energy and spirit in the attacking party, but the landscape is picturesque and rural, and adds greatly, both in the foreground and the distance, to the effect of the piece. The forest, enlivened by a few rays of sunshine, and vanishing at last in the mist that shrouds the horizon, is much in keeping with the style adopted by many of our contemporary landscape-painters. Its brown depths bring into relief the shining coats of the pack, who are of that genuine Pyrenean breed with shaggy manes which Oudry had many opportunities of studying in the king's kennels. Oudry had on several occasions illustrated on his canvas these internecine struggles between wolves and dogs.

He contributed, as Diderot informs us, to the Exhibition of 1753 a piece in which mastiffs are fighting with three wolves and a stag. "There was too great an uniformity," says Diderot, "in this painting, and the landscape was hard and uninviting."

Although we cannot deny that the colouring is somewhat cold in many of Oudry's *chefs-d'œuvre*, and that his skies are deficient in the brightness and the beauty which are so characteristic of Desportes, we can clearly see, by some of his efforts, that he might easily have avoided this defect. He has painted two leverets of unexceptionable colour in the same production—the one tawny and the other black. The one is relieved by a brownish background formed of the trunks of trees and of deep green brushwood; while the other comes out upon a radiant sky. These striking contrasts are always

pleasing to the eye, and the picture to which we allude is worthy to be placed side by side with another representing two slender leverets, with yellow spots, who, for their intelligence and symmetry, have been immortalised by our artist under the names of Silva and Pet.

#### "THE STARTLED FOX."

"I warn you," says Oudry, in addressing the members of the Academy, "that I shall often mingle my own ideas with those of my master. I should indeed find it difficult to separate them, so long have they formed part and parcel of the same *répertoire*. Moreover, forty years of incessant labour have necessarily furnished me with some additional knowledge which I shall not impart less freely than that which I look upon as the property of another. Devoted to my art as I am, I should feel highly gratified if I could so communicate the knowledge I possess as that they may be as well acquainted with it as I am myself. I know of nothing so paltry or so unworthy of a noble art like our own, as to have little secrets, and to refuse to do for our successors what our predecessors have done for us. In all these remarks, as I have before said, I am only speaking to the students of the Academy; and, to avoid any misconception on this point, I beg you will excuse my addressing a few words to them in particular.

"The colouring is one of the most important parts of painting. It is the colouring which gives it a peculiar character,—it is the colouring which distinguishes it from sculpture,—it is the colour that constitutes the charm and brilliancy of our great masterpieces. You are already far enough advanced to be aware of this; and you, moreover, know that in the colouring you must attend to two things: the local colour, and the *chiaro-oscuro*. The local colour is, as you are aware, nothing but that which is natural to each individual object. The *chiaro-oscuro*, on the other hand, is the art of distributing the lights and shades with an ingenuity which shall give effect to the piece. It is not, however, enough for the artist to have only a general idea of the subject. He must have an intimate knowledge of the art of applying the local colour, and must acquire the skill necessary to give it weight by contrasting it with the other colouring."

In "The Startled Fox," the painting which we reproduce in our engraving, he has illustrated the truth of these principles. How admirably is the local colour applied! and with what skill and intelligence are the lights and shades distributed, or, in more artistic language, is the *chiaro-oscuro* managed! Renard, subtle and sly, is for once outwitted, and just at the moment, too, when he thought himself secure of his plunder. Rage, vexation, disappointment, revenge, every evil passion which can actuate a fox, are well represented in the expression of his face. His is the unpleasant surprise so well described by Bloomfield in his "Fox Hunt."—

"In earliest hours of dark unhooded morn,  
Ere yet one rosy cloud bespeaks the dawn,  
While far abroad the fox pursues his prey,  
He's doomed to risk the perils of the day,  
From his strong hold blocked out, perhaps to bleed,  
Or owe his life to fortune or to speed.  
For now the pack impatient rushing on,  
Range through the darkest coverts one by one;  
Trace every spot, while down each noble glade  
That guides the eye beneath a changeful shade,  
The loitering sportsman feels the instinctive flame,  
And checks his steed to mark the springing game  
'Midst intersecting cuts and winding ways,  
The huntsman cheers his dogs, and anxious strays  
Where every narrow riding, even shorn,  
Gives back the echo of his mellow horn."

This echo, the startled fox has heard, and has found out now to his cost that "there's many a slip between the cup and the lip."

## "THE STAG HUNT."

There is something inexpressibly wild and imposing in this "Stag Hunt," and the sylvan scene in which it occurs. We feel we are in at the death—the death of one of the noblest of the antlered monarchs of the forest. This is, indeed,

"The war of the many with one."



THE ELEPHANT AND THE RAT. FROM A PAINTING BY OUDRY.

There he lies—that fleet, that princely creature; one hound is hanging to his foaming lip; one is gnawing his broad, muscular shoulder; several are tearing his haunches; several more in the distance are ready to share in the spoil of one whom they have not helped to conquer. It is a painful scene.



Tears pour from the wild, gazelle-like eyes of the noble victim, and he is indeed and in truth "a hero of suffering."

"THE ELEPHANT AND THE RAT."

As a proof of Oudry's edifying humility, the following passage from the address to which we have alluded, will be interesting to our readers :—" You know, gentlemen," said he, addressing the members



THE HERON. FROM A PAINTING BY OUDRY.

of the French Royal Academy, "how gifted Largillière really was, and what admirable rules he has laid down with reference to great effects, and the magic power of his art. These rules he instilled into my mind and impressed upon my memory with all the earnest solicitude of a father for a favourite son ;

and it is, I assure you, with the greatest gratification an honest man can feel who is both attached to his art and to the youth who are really seeking to distinguish themselves in it, that I, in my turn, endeavour to impress them upon you. M. de Largillière has a thousand times told me that he was indebted to the Flemish School, in which he had been brought up, for those excellent principles which he has so well illustrated in his productions; and he has often expressed to me his great regret at the little use our artists have made of the great assistance they might have derived from this source. He may, perhaps, have been a little prejudiced in favour of that great nursing mother—the Flemish School—for whom he never ceased to entertain a sincere regard; but even if you should consider some of his observations as a little tinged with prejudice, I hope you will not on that account deem them unworthy of your attention, and that even his errors, if you should discover any errors in him, will appear to you to be those of a great master." Now, in the painting of "The Rat and the Elephant," from which our engraving is taken, we see that Oudry himself, with all his respect for his master, and his admiration for the Flemish School, has not copied the models of its great masters in the development of the female form. The figure of the female rider of this huge animal is graceful, delicate, and slender in its proportions—quite a contrast, indeed, to the square-built, fleshy vrows of Rubens and his imitators.

#### "THE HERON."

This picture is an illustration of a French fable, but our engraving, though a faithful copy, can give but a faint idea of the beauty of the original. The objects stand out so well against the dark background, that it is certain the artist must have put into practice his own precept, and have copied from nature the figures with a canvas stretched behind them of the colour of his background. The trunk of the tree is truthfully represented, and the foliage irreproachable in tone and tint.

#### "BERTRAND AND RATON."

This is an illustration of one of La Fontaine's most popular fables. It is more familiar to English ears as "The Cat's Paw." The old-fashioned country fireplace, with its blazing logs and billets, and its hot wood-ashes, in which the chestnuts are roasted to a turn, are brought graphically before us by the glowing pencil of the gifted Oudry. The dark and demon-like form of the crafty, selfish monkey is thrown into strong relief by the blazing fire; and pussy, generally so sly and cautious, has evidently found her master, and is fairly outwitted. The accessories of this picture are admirably characteristic and graphic in their rude and rustic simplicity; and the silly wonder of the gude wife, as she peeps in at the door, and watches the pair, is in itself a comedy. As a specimen of the humorous, rustic, and grotesque, "Bertrand and Raton" is quite unsurpassed. The light and shade, and the *chiaro-oscuro*, are managed in masterly style.

In 1755 a fit of apoplexy interrupted the progress of the indefatigable painter. Alas, that the casket that contains the precious gem of genius should be so fragile compared to the gem itself! Oudry seems to have had forewarnings of his coming end. He intended to visit Beauvais, hoping to recover his health in the country; but he had hardly carried his plan into execution when he expired on the 30th of April, 1755, at the age of sixty-nine.

"Oudry," says a celebrated amateur, "was an excellent painter, and an excellent man. He had few enemies, and many friends; and he preserved his integrity even at the corrupt court of Louis XV." What can we add to such a tribute at this!

His love of music almost equalled his passion for painting; and in the ornaments that surround his portrait (painted by Largillière) there is a palette on one side and a violoncello on the other. Oudry's great industry is proved by the numerous pictures he has left behind him. Of these some are on Scriptural subjects, others are figures and animals. In the last mentioned style his beautiful illustrations of La Fontaine's Fables are among his most interesting productions.

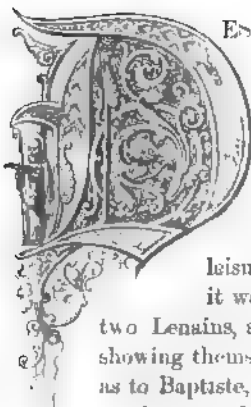
## HIS MERITS.

It is impossible to say how greatly this indefatigable artist has enriched the French School with models of inestimable value up to the present day,—models that will in all probability be prized by successive generations. But here we must observe that, as an animal painter, Oudry was not equally successful in all his subjects. His lions, panthers, and tigers were not sufficiently fierce. He seemed to have forestalled Van Amburg in taming the wild beasts; but his dogs, monkeys, wolves, and foxes are perfection.

In still-life he has hardly been rivalled. His groups of birds and fish serve us now as subjects of imitation for this style of art, of which he may almost be considered the founder.

In illustrating Scarron's Comic Romance Oudry was less at home; though, at times, we must own Oudry's sketches are as free as Scarron's letterpress. But the subject was, on the whole, too coarse for the virtuous and steady artist; and, to be candid, required more native humour than Oudry possessed. None, however, can deny that in his illustrations of this work he has achieved triumphs in his dispositions of light and shade.

## ALEXANDER FRANCIS DESPORTES.



DESPORTES was the earliest painter of the French school who made animals and hunting-scenes his principal study. This school had existed and flourished for at least a hundred and fifty years before any artist thought it worth his while to devote his genius to the delineation of animals, at least, with a view to making them the heroes of a picture. Indeed, since that great epoch in the history of art, called "The Renaissance," there had not been one painter in this now popular style before the time of Desportes. Sebastian Bourdon, it is true, had produced some grotesque pictures, hastily rubbed in during his leisure hours; but this was merely a sort of holiday work, in which he indulged as it were to recreate his mind from the great labour of his historical paintings. The two Lenains, although devoted to rustic subjects, were forgiven for their condescension in showing themselves familiar with such scenes, on account of their large scripture pieces; and as to Baptiste, although only a flower painter, he gave such dignity, grandeur, and genius to the reproduction on canvas of those lovely "summer friends," those "flowers that are the poetry of earth,"—as the bard tells us also, the "stars are the poetry of heaven,"—that even the members of the Royal Academy were proud to welcome him among them. Alexander Francis Desportes was, then, the first painter who introduced into the French school that style of art which the Snayderses of Flanders and the Benedittis of Italy had made so deservedly popular.

In order to produce such a painter of hunting-pieces as Desportes, such a royal patron and amateur of the chase as Louis XIV. was perhaps necessary. Louis, in everything he did, both was and aimed at being "Louis the Superb." In his boundless and haughty egotism, and in the great importance that he himself, in the calculations of his overweening pride, attached to his most trifling actions, gestures, pleasures, and even whims, it occurred to him that if so great a king deigned to hunt, no painter could be too eminent or gifted to represent the sylvan scenes he dignified and graced by his august presence. If it was his royal pleasure to hunt the wild boar or to chase the stag, it was also his royal pleasure that an eminent painter should be of the party, for no other purpose than that of watching the hunt, of seizing (as it were) the spirit and instinct of the hounds on the tract—of being, in short, the portrait-painter in ordinary (and they well deserved to have one), less of "His Most Christian Majesty" than of his stag-hounds and his harriers.

Some of Desportes' hounds seem to realise the exquisite description Theseus gives of them to his fair bride, Hippolyta, in reply to the Amazon queen, when she says—

" 'T was with Hercules and Cadmus once,  
When in a wood of Crete, they bay'd the bears  
With hounds of Sparta. never did I hear



BERTRAND AND RATON. FROM A PAINTING BY OUDRY.

Such gallant chiding; for besides the groves,  
The skies, the fountains, every region near  
Seem'd all one mutual cry. 'I never heard  
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.'



FRANCIS DESPORTES. FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF.



Theseus replies with a description that might have suggested some of Desportes' noblest efforts,—

"My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,  
So flew'd, so manded; and their heads are hung  
With ears that sweep away the morning dew,  
Crook-kneed and dew-lap'd, like Thessalian bulls;  
Slow in pursuit, but match'd in mouth-like bells,  
Each under each. A cry more tunable  
Was never holla'd to, nor cheer'd with horn  
In Crete, in Sparta, or in Thessaly;  
Judge when you hear!"

In this description, which brings so vividly before us those noble hounds Desportes has so admirably depicted, we see another proof of the universality of Shakespeare's knowledge. Whether describing the in-

ward workings of a monarch's guilty conscience, or the outward attributes of a stag-hound, he is equally master of his subject.

#### "THE WOLF HUNT."

Sneyders surely never surpassed this spirited composition. There is in each hound an individual expression, although all are animated by one universal instinct. The grouping is masterly,—the anatomy of each dog reveals the closest and most careful study. The wolf's face is full of rage, pain, defiance, wrath, and even despair; but Desportes has not fallen into the common mistake of making these passions take a human shape. The wolf is a hero,—for though many leagued and relentless foes are upon him at once, he defends himself to the last of his blood and his breath. But in every look and gesture he is still a wolf.

The landscape and the trees are very effective, and every little accessory is rendered with the most conscientious care. This composition alone would entitle Desportes to a distinguished place as a painter of animals and hunting pieces. The accredited official catalogue of the Louvre includes only five pictures by Desportes—that is to say in the edition now before us, published in 1847, only five are noted down. Probably a search after these *chefs-d'œuvre* has taken place since that date, for we now find twenty-three admirable pictures by this master are exhibited in the French galleries. At the head of these we must place the portrait of Desportes himself, in sporting costume, reposing at the foot of a tree, surrounded by retrievers and dead game—had we space to describe them we could go through a list of more than twenty masterpieces, some consisting of most animated hunts, and some of exquisitely painted still-life. D'Argenville says, "We lost in 1743 a great painter in the person of Alexander Francis Desportes; he was born in the year of our Lord 1661, at the village of Champigneulle (in Champagne). His father, who was a wealthy husbandman, sent him, when only twelve years' old, to Paris, to live with an uncle who was settled there." Poets and painters have no right to any distinction but that which their works secure them, nor ought they to pride themselves on any laurel but that they themselves have planted.

Many of them, indeed, may say with the Claude Melnotte of Sir E. B. Lytton's exquisite drama, "The Lady of Lyons,"

"Then with such jewels as the exploring mind  
Wins from the caves of knowledge, did I buy  
My ransom of those twin girdlers of th' aspiring heart—  
Low birth and iron fortune!"

When speaking of those lights of an age and country, its geniuses (in whatever branch of art), we do not ask "of whom were they born?" but "what was born of them?"

That tumble-down hovel at Stratford-upon-Avon in which Shakespeare first saw the light, inspires deeper reverence than any castle in the land. Burns was a ploughboy, and Byron was a baron; but posterity will perhaps in some respects rank the author of "The Cotter's Saturday Night" above that of "Childe Harold;" at any rate, the former, if he never soared so high as the latter, never sank so low; and both will live, for both have indeed entwined their "lines in their land's language."

But, to return to Desportes. His patent of nobility is derived from his works, he had no other. "It was," says D'Argenville, "during an illness that confined him to his bed at his uncle's, that his genius for drawing was accidentally discovered. His uncle gave him some paltry print to amuse him in his illness. The young genius copied it so faithfully that no doubt could be felt as to the decided talent he possessed." He was placed as a pupil with Nicasius, a Flemish painter, whose *forte* was animals and hunting pieces.

Nicasius was himself fresh from the studio of the great Sneyders, of whom he had learned the secret of his bold and daring touch, the art of designating the different kinds of animals by the mere handling of the brush, making it depict (almost without effort) their silken or woollen coats, their fur, hair, or feathers; but, above all, he had acquired the art of giving life (by a strong contrast of colour and attitude) to those terrible battles of wild beasts, those hunting pieces where lions roar and tigers spring, or where the wild boar is beset by a pack of panting hounds, many of whom, though gored and bleeding, are unconquered still.

What Nicasius had learned of Sneyders he imparted to Desportes; but in passing through the mind of the French painter the great Fleming's lessons were much modified. The result was a style

less wild and impetuous, but more chaste and true. What was wildfire in Sneyders was a lambent flame in Desportes.

The haughty companion of Rubens gave to his animals a degree of fury which Desportes softened into interpretations of life among the lower world, where there was as much reality, though less fire, the impetuosity and warmth of the great Flemish master, became on the canvas of the French painter an agreeable and well tempered vivacity.

Sneyders and Nicasius had painted hunting pieces where heroes seemed to figure, such as Actæon and Adonis; Desportes was satisfied with depicting the chase as enjoyed by kings and nobles. Unfortunately, before the pupil's education was "finished," the master died. Death separated Nicasius and Desportes. It is easy to discover the influence of Nicasius's lessons in the free touch (so easy, yet so fine), and in the bright fresh colouring of Desportes.

Desportes, though very young at the time of Nicasius's decease, refused to have any other master. His devotion to his art increased tenfold. That was the principal effect on his life of his master's death. Firmly resolved to be pre-eminent as a painter of animals and hunting pieces, he gave his whole attention to whatever could tend to improve and embellish his compositions. He was very devoted to the study of drawing from models; and when, at a later period, he painted portraits, he reaped the benefit of his close application to the great groundwork of all success in art—correctness in design.

He included in his attention to the art of drawing with correctness and facility, not merely the "human face divine," and the forms of men, women, and children, but every object that came under his notice. Plants, fruits, vegetables, animals of all kinds and sizes, from the elephant to the tortoise, the boa-constrictor to the little whip-snake and the lizard, alive and dead; all that was picturesque—all that was grotesque—nothing was above or beneath the reach of his wonderful pencil.

Before he was thirty years' of age he had made a name—a great name, too. "He undertook every kind of commission," says D'Argenville, "whether it were to paint ceilings or design decorations for theatres, ornaments, illustrations, animals, no matter what, he excelled in all; and ultimately he became associated with Claude Audran (a clever ornamental decorator) in embellishing and decorating the château of Anet, and the ménagerie at Versailles. In Desportes' contributions to these undertakings will be found great affluence of genius, a sprightly fancy, much truth of expression, a light touch, and exquisite colouring.

His *début* at courts and in the world of fashion was not that of a painter of animals or hunting pieces. Some Polish noblemen whom he had known at Paris, and the French ambassador at the court of the king, John Sobieski (the Abbé de Polignac), induced Desportes to go with them to Poland. He was presented to the king and queen. He painted their portraits; and from that time he became popular at court, and the object of general attention. To be the painter of the king is, with courtiers, to be the king of painters. The greatest noblemen of that country (among others the Cardinal D'Arquien) begged him to paint their portraits. He was overwhelmed with presents, and still more so with compliments. Flattery assailed him on all sides. It is so easy for a portrait-painter to pay back with interest this base coin, which, as Rochefocault so shrewdly says, "would have no currency but through the medium of our vanity."

This sojourn at the Polish court lasted two years; at the end of which time Desportes was seized with a great desire to return to Paris.

#### "THE HOUNDS."

These noble animals were probably painted from some of the kennels of Louis Quatorze; and the picture represents two large fox-hounds, drawn to perfection, every muscle correct, every hair in keeping with the nature of the animal; sagacity in their almost speaking faces. Dogs are they that Sneyders might have been proud of, and even our own Landseer not have disowned. There is life, and all but reason in their large liquid eyes; and there is something singularly noble, calm, and thoroughbred in their attitudes and expression. The landscape is exquisitely imagined and finished. The fore-ground is a perfect gem, and so is the trunk of a tree, in the branches of which a beautiful cock-pheasant has taken refuge, and where two smaller birds display the charms of their forms and plumage, and the skill and knowledge of Desportes as an ornithologist.

All Desportes' pictures are refreshing, pleasant, and cheering to the eye and heart; and this

painting of "The Hounds" bring before us two creatures whom we can fancy faithful, loving, obedient, untiring in the chase, yet companionable on the hearth-rug ; and as we gaze on their strong limbs and affectionate, honest faces, we remember many an anecdote of canine devotion ; and we wish we could pat their fine glossy heads, and stroke their thick backs.



THE WOLF HUNT. FROM A PAINTING BY HIERONYMUS.

Hunting in the days of the *grand monarque* was a very expensive amusement. But what a brilliant display was the royal hunt ! What luxury and magnificence distinguished the last moments of the expiring roe !

The sporting establishment of the king consisted of a host, whose maintenance must have cost upwards of a million per annum. The forests in the neighbourhood of Paris were kept with the



greatest care, and regularly stocked with stags, fawns, roebucks, boars, and welves. During the summer months the court hunted at Versailles, Meudon, and Compiègne; during the winter, at Rambouillet,



THE HOUNDS. FROM A PAINTING BY DESPORTES.

and at Fontainebleau. Those woods, so silent and solitary for nine months of the year, were suddenly instinct with life. On every side huntsmen and whippers-in were watching for the moment when

the object of the chase should break from its cover. Servants in gilded liveries—courtiers on prancing steeds—royal pursuivants—the carriages of the masters of the hounds—the splendid equipages of the ladies who had been honoured with an invitation—pages on horseback—the cage that was ready for the conveyance of the captured stag—and last, though by no means least, the pack, consisting of some three hundred dogs, held in check by the keepers of the king's hounds. The king himself came late, after due notice had been given of his approach by a messenger despatched beforehand.

Desportes' wonderful genius for painting the subjects of the chase induced the king to appoint him historiographer of the royal hunt; and, to make the post worthy of his acceptance, he annexed to it, with his usual liberality, a salary and apartments in the Louvre. If any Indian animals were added to the royal ménagerie at Versailles,—if the royal aviaries were enriched by any rare specimen of birds,—it was the duty of Desportes, as historiographer, to describe them on canvas. As he was invited to every hunting party, he had good opportunities of studying the peculiarities of the scene. He stored up in his memory the attitude of the dogs—the play of their muscles—their flying leaps and eager speed—the tragic *dénouement* of the drama in “the stag at bay”—the death—and the fleshing of the hounds. When his mind was well impressed with the contour of the figures which were to stand in the foreground of his piece, he paid a visit to the kennel, and there sketched from nature the finest dogs in the pack; and after he had copied five or six of them upon one sheet, he showed them to the king, who recognised them at once, and called them by their names.

When his object was only to give correctly the physical conformation of the animals, he was in the habit of tracing the outline on gray paper with a black crayon, relieved with white chalk; but sometimes he used Indian ink. As, however, all these studies of animals were the constituent elements of future pictures, he coloured his sketches with great care, as he considered that accuracy of tone was as essential as correctness of contour. He then executed his paintings in oils upon thick gray paper—a proceeding which none but a first-rate artist could adopt, as it admitted of no erasures or alterations.

There are “studies of dogs” by Desportes in different coloured chalks, which are beautiful beyond description. They are instinct with the fire of genius, and are life-like in their imitation of nature. To possess the patronage of the king, and, what was better still, to deserve it, was more than enough to entitle the painter to a niche in the Royal Academy.

Francis Desportes was elected a member of the Royal Academy of France in August, 1699. He must have been at that time in his thirty-seventh year. His inauguration picture is one of the most popular of his productions. He has introduced himself in hunter's gear, and has managed to display to the greatest advantage in this piece his various talents. On one side is a large and beautiful greyhound, who seems, with his expressive eyes, to be questioning his master. The foreshortening of this animal is worthy of all praise. Scattered around the sportsman is the produce of the chase—pheasants, partridges, hares, wild ducks—painted to the life, but still subordinate in the composition to the figure of the painter himself,—a noble, full-length portrait, leaning with one hand on his gun, while he is stroking with the other a favourite dog.

The annals of the Academy inform us that he was enrolled a member of the council in 1704. The simplicity, the originality, and the nature, which were all so peculiar to Desportes, characterise alike his great and his small pieces. He repudiates all systems; he despises all routine. Nature alone inspires and directs him in the composition of his piece. In the museum of the Louvre there are no less than twenty-three of his productions, all in good preservation, and of surpassing merit.

#### “THE POINTER.”

The beautiful picture from which this engraving is copied is one of the most valuable of the Desportes' masterpieces in the Louvre. Everything proves in this piece that Desportes was himself a keen sportsman. How well he has seized and how inimitably he has illustrated the sudden inaction of the dog at the moment that he points; a mysterious and irresistible agency seems to restrain him; and there is something quite startling in the fixedness of his gaze. How cleverly conceived is the contrast between the attitude of the three dogs; while the terror-stricken game, too frightened to fly, are cowering in the covert.

Oudry, of whom we treated in a previous number, was for a long time a contemporary and rival of Desportes, although he survived him a great many years. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish

between the two masters, for as they both handled similar subjects, and as the incidents of the chase are always much the same, it was impossible for them to introduce any striking differences. They were, moreover, in a certain sense, disciples of the same school. Oudry had imbibed from Largillière the principles of the Flemish painters; and Desportes was, as we have said, a pupil at second-hand of the great Sneyders. But when we begin to analyse their productions, we soon discover the distinction between the two masters.

There is in Desportes both exuberance and ease. He has illustrated, and has fully appreciated the nature of instinct in dogs, and his productions are more remarkable for simplicity and grace than for artistic combination. Now Oudry is, on the other hand, a very skilful artificer. He knows all "the tricks of his trade," and, with far less genius and originality than Desportes, he is superior to him in the art of distributing his lights and shadows, in the grouping of his figures, in preserving the unity of his composition, and in working out those academical rules which he explains so well in his written and spoken addresses.

Desportes was, indeed, a painter of a more *primæval* kind, and belonged to that generation of prolific and agreeable artists, whose truthful and spontaneous genius diffused over the seventeenth century much of the freedom and simplicity of the sixteenth. In his colouring, which is far more fresh, soft, and clear than that of Oudry, he has faithfully preserved the traditions of the Flemish school to which he belonged; and it is this superiority over Oudry in so important a department which gives to his pictures that air of finish and effect in which he would otherwise appear to be deficient.

Oudry may possibly have possessed some of the qualifications which insure the success of a painter, in which Desportes was wanting. He had a better notion of arrangement in the composition of his large pictures than his rival, and knew how to elevate the style in which he painted. But on the other hand, what a fascination there is in the simplicity of Desportes. How graceful, supple, and animated are his dogs! how intelligent, and even sly, are his birds!

In the Louvre there are two pieces, the one by Desportes, and the other by Oudry; both descriptive of a cock-fight. Oudry has illustrated the position of the belligerent parties with more skill than Desportes. One of his cocks, who has been thrown on his back, is endeavouring to seize in his powerful claws the rival who has capsize him. The plumage of the prostrate bird is glossy and beautiful; the flapping of his wings is artistic and arresting. These important and meritorious features are wanting in the production of Desportes. His fighting cocks have neither the same pride, nor the same warlike impetuosity. Nevertheless, the introduction of a few hens, who are the terrified witnesses of the brilliant passage of arms, which is waged in honour of their beauty, gives a piquancy and satirical drollery to the scene, which are preferable, in our opinion, to all the skill and knowledge that Oudry has displayed in his composition.

A simple but attentive observer of nature, Desportes had all the requisites for a painter of fruits and flowers. The velvety vermillion of the peach, the ruby tint of the pomegranate, and the pale but transparent gold of the Fontainebleau grape—all these variations of colour he knew well how to produce on his palette; and, in this unpretending branch of art, Chardin is the only painter of the present age who has equalled him, either in the firmness of his touch, or the originality of his style.

Like the fabulous progeny of the gods, the productions of some of the painters, from the moment of their conception to the period of their birth, have cost them little or no pain. The idea and the execution are almost simultaneous. Desportes was one of the privileged few, and the number of bantlings to which he has given birth, in the shape of masterpieces, is in consequence enormous.

From the day in which his fame procured for him plenty of occupation as a painter of pannels, of sideboards, and of porticoes, he continued to work, with very little relaxation, for sixty years. In conjunction with Claude Audran, he painted the decorations of Anet Castle, of the Versailles ménagerie, of Marly, Meudon, Muette, and Fontainebleau.

In 1735 he was commissioned to execute eight large pieces, as a renovation of some faded Gobelin tapestry; and while he was employed upon this gigantic undertaking, he completed, in addition, six *chefs-d'œuvre* for Compiègne, among which is the celebrated "Stag at Bay."

France is not the only country he enriched with his art treasures. He paid England a visit, in company with the Duke of Aumont, ambassador of Louis XIV. at the Court of St. James's; and he left among us not only a vast number of pleasing compositions, but also a name which soon achieved a European celebrity. His masterpieces were the subject of eager and jealous competition among

picture-fanciers, at London, Warsaw, Munich, Vienna, and Turin. Latterly some of them have found their way even into the Hermitage Museum of St. Petersburg. This amazing productiveness will appear less astonishing when we remember that Desportes lived to be eighty-two years of age, and that he worked to the very last with a kind of juvenile enthusiasm and vigour. Strange to say,



THE POINTER. FROM A PAINTING BY DESPORTES.

he has left no piece in which there is any trace of a decay of genius or energy. With his powers unimpaired to the last, he has been surnamed by the Abbé Defontaine, "The Nestor of Painting."

This admirable artist was also an excellent man. His character was irreproachable on the score of morality, and as he was obliging, lively, and humorous, he must have been a very eligible husband for



JAMES STELLA. FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF.

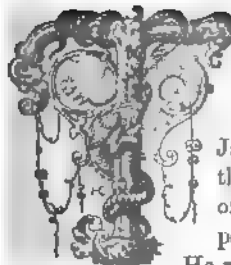


the lady whom he married when he was thirty years of age. The expression of his face, as we see from his portrait, was that of a man kind, and yet "canny." Although genuine and unaffected, he had a certain degree of pride which made him resent the insolence of fools. When on one occasion a millionaire was boasting before him of his money, he quietly took him down by saying, "I could easily be what you are; but you could never be what I am."

The principal *chef-d'œuvre* of Desportes have now been despoiled of their frames. The French nation, trampled under the heel of despotism, care little for these reminiscences of the pleasures of a livelier, gayer, and more glorious, if not freer and happier age. It is for the Frenchman a painful effort of the imagination to endeavour to see these boars, stags, and roebucks of Desportes

through the same medium as Louis and his court beheld them. In contemplating the masterpieces of this artist, his countrymen feel that they are, like the illustrator of the scene, out of place and out of date. The painter loses his prestige by being separated from the old hunting seats where they were so completely in keeping with the character of the country and the company. Displayed now in the vast galleries of the Louvre, the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the great masters remind us of those gods to whom a niche was assigned in the Pantheon of Rome, and who, once enrolled among the deities of that temple, lost in one day their altars, their sacrifices, their worshippers, and became, indeed, but a fractional part of a confused mass of godheads, whom the people no longer recognised individually, but coldly worshipped without understanding who they were, or what were their peculiar functions.

## JAMES STELLA.



THE name of Stella, famous for three generations, in which genius would seem to have been an heirloom, is associated with the history of painting throughout the reigns of Louis XIII. and Louis XIV.

James Stella, the subject of our memoir, was the contemporary and the friend of James Callot, the intimate friend of Poussin, the *protégé* of Cardinal Richelieu, and the painter-in-ordinary to the king. His masterpieces adorn the public galleries of all the capitals of Europe. Rome, Florence, and Paris—cities in which the art of painting finds such magnificent representatives—are all rich in Stella's masterpieces.

He was himself the prolific sire of a large family of painters and engravers; and, through the co-operation of his three nieces, he has achieved an immortality of fame. James Stella set out on his pilgrimage to Rome at twenty years of age; but he had given proofs of his talent for painting when he was but nine.

Stella's ancestry belonged to a nation of painters, for we have it on good authority that he was of Flemish extraction. His father, having stopped at Lyons on his return from Rome, formed a matrimonial engagement in that town with the daughter of an attorney of Bressa. Two sons, Francis and James, were the offspring of this union. The latter was a mere child when he lost his father.

Circumstances favoured Stella when he first set out in search of advancement; for, as he was passing through Florence, he found the city all alive with preparations for a *fête* which the Grand Duke Cosmo of Medicis was about to give in order to celebrate the marriage of his son Ferdinand.

Our readers must bear in mind that Stella, at this epoch, was twenty years of age, and a painter of some experience. He contrived to get presented to the sovereign, whose favour he seems immediately to have secured, for the great man at once offered him lodgings and a pension. His work was to represent Florentine processions. That which took place in honour of St. John the Baptist seems to have attracted the most attention. In the engraving taken from Stella's picture of this subject, there is considerable promise. In style it resembles the works of John Miel, and it is remarkable for ease, freedom, and vigour.

Stella remained at Florence seven years. He then proceeded to Rome, where he found the school of painting torn by contending factions; but, unattracted by these *divisions*, he went straight to Poussin as the orthodox master of the school of art.

The Jesuits were among the first who employed the pencil of Stella. His imagination seems to have delighted in illustrating monastic scenes. One of his most remarkable pictures was executed on marble. It is entitled "Jesus receiving his Mother in Heaven." In this picture the painter has fancifully called the veins in the marble to his assistance, and compelled them to imitate clouds and curtains. To reach the highest eminence in art there was wanting in Stella neither judgment, imagination, nor taste. The only obstacle in his path was the feebleness of his constitution. Weak and languid, he

was often physically incapable of expressing his ideas. Want of constitutional energy was in him the cause of many a failure; and if in some instances he stopped short of actual beauty, it was not because he was deficient in appreciation of it, but because he had not strength to realize his own conception. Following, however, the example of Poussin, he studied the models of the *ante-Renaissance* school, but not having mind sufficient to elaborate an original interpretation of their principles, he struck out for himself a quiet and delicate style, which was in harmony with his own character, and savoured of the genius of those masters who had felt the noblest inspiration of art.

In Stella the love of art was a fever that gave a false strength to his declining health; and when we recollect how languid was his constitution, the variety and number of his productions are quite surprising. The long winter evenings he passed in sketching a series of twenty-two pieces, illustrative of the "Life of the Virgin Mary." He managed also to find time to complete a series of fifty engravings, entitled "The Games of Childhood." Stella was also remarkable for the skill and taste with which he drew the designs for embossing on silver, and with which he described architectural ornaments and objects of *virtu*. The Jesuits, who, as we just remarked, were the first who recognised his talent, soon brought Stella into notice. The Companions of the Order of Jesus were at that time celebrating in every quarter of the globe the canonization of their founder, Ignatius Loyola, and publishing in every land the alleged miracles, not only of Francis Xavier, but of a whole calendar of black-robed saints.

Stella seemed to them to be exactly the man they wanted. Poussin's style and handling were too elevated and spiritual for the objects which the Jesuits had in view; but Stella could illustrate the ecstasy of St. Ignatius, his seraphic visions, and the rays of celestial light illuminating his head and his heart with that species of religious sensuality which gives a worldliness and materialism to the most heavenly conceptions. These pieces may possibly have fulfilled the expectations of those who have always been more anxious to influence and excite the imagination than convince the reason, or purify the heart; but they can never have any salutary effect upon the minds of men who see deeper than the mere surface of things.

Stella was at first commissioned to make designs for a series of engravings illustrative of the miracles of St. Philip of Neri, and also to illuminate with little figures the breviary of Pope Urban VIII. He was quite at home in this kind of work, for he had indeed all the qualifications which engraving renders most conspicuous, and all the faults which it conceals. Composition in drawing was perhaps our painter's forte. Beauty of conception, artistic grouping, propriety of gesture and attitude, all came out to great advantage in the engraving. But the caroty tone of his pink colouring, his stereotyped models, his undecided drapery, in which were introduced so many harsh and badly-assorted tints—all these faults which had disfigured his canvas, had no longer any existence on the copper plate, so that the engraving from the picture had many advantages over the original. Just as we have seen in the case of our own Turner, whose confused and apparently hap-hazard productions are only intelligible when presented to us through the medium of an engraving.

Many of the pieces which Stella executed during his sojourn at Rome, and which have been rudely engraved in wood by Paul Maupain, of Abbeville, are, notwithstanding the coarseness of the workmanship, better in the engraving than in the painting. The very harshness of the former diminishes the effect of the effeminacy of the latter.

#### "THE VILLAGE DANCE."

Stella's fame travelled far and wide. Some of his pieces which were exhibited in Spain made his most catholic majesty extremely anxious to get him to Madrid. He sent a special messenger to invite him; and Stella was preparing to set out for Spain, when, without any warning, he was suddenly arrested and imprisoned, together with his brother Francis Stella, upon an accusation, as Félibien says, of an amorous intrigue, carried on in the family with whom he was residing at Rome. The biographer gives the following account of the matter:—"Stella, beloved and respected by all who knew him, as well on account of the genuine kindness of his disposition as the genius he displayed, had been chosen, by the inhabitants of the district in which he resided, president of the parish. Part of the duties of this office consisted in having the gates closed at the appointed times, and in 'keeping himself possession of the keys.' One day that the 'people's gate' had been closed by his orders, some private individuals

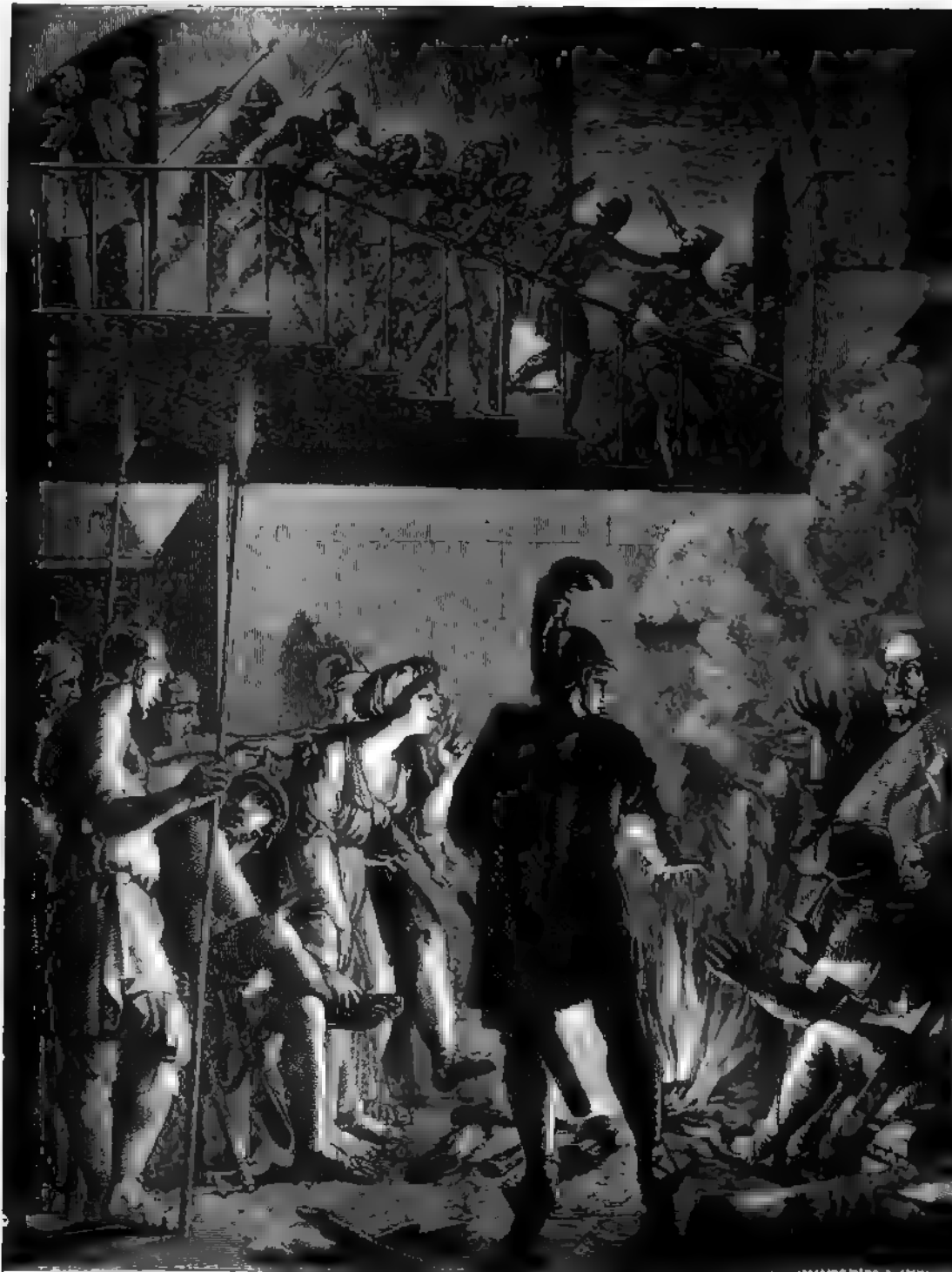
requested him to allow it to be opened at an unorthodox hour. Stella felt it his duty to refuse this application, and the disappointed applicants vowed revenge against him. They suborned false witnesses, who accused the painter, and had him incarcerated. The real facts of the case were, however, soon made public; Stella was honourably acquitted of a charge which, in Rome, might have led to



THE VILLAGE DANCE. FROM A PAINTING BY JAMES STELLA.

disagreeable results, and his accusers, convicted of having borne false witness, were publicly whipped." Félibien informs us, that he relieved the tedium of his short imprisonment by tracing with coal on the wall of the cell in which he was confined a sketch of "The Virgin and Child." This trifling effort of his genius was considered so meritorious that Cardinal Francis Barberini came to see it. Some years





ST. PETER DENIES CHRIST. FROM A PAINTING BY JAMES STELLA.

ago it was still in existence, lighted by a lamp kept for that purpose constantly burning in front of it; and many a Roman Catholic devotee has made it the shrine of his pilgrimage. Stella was an indefatigable collector of objects of *vertu*; and he was known in the old curiosity shops both as a contributor and a purchaser. A painting of his, entitled "The Judgment of Paris," was drawn with such nicety, beauty, and skill, that the five figures of which it was composed were compressed within the dimensions of the stone of a finger-ring.

In the year 1634, he returned to France in the suite of the French ambassador, Field-Marshal Créquy, and brought with him a magnificent collection of pictures, among which are some of the most celebrated *chefs-d'œuvre* of his friend Poussin, which Claudine Bousonnet, the accomplished niece of the painter, soon afterwards etched on copper with so bold and daring a graver. He visited the principal cities of Italy in the suite of the Field-Marshal Créquy, and enriched his cabinet of objects of *vertu* by ransacking the old curiosity shops in all the towns through which he passed.

At Venice, where so many celebrated picture galleries invite the attention of the painter, he added many gems to his collection of masterpieces; and at Milan he was courted and *fêted* by the Cardinal Alborno, with whom he had been intimate at Rome, and who was now governor of the capital of Lombardy. His eminence offered Stella the post of President of the Academy of Art, which had been founded by St. Charles; but the artist, anxious to return to France, after so long an absence, and intending, if possible, to accept the invitation of the King of Spain, declined the cardinal's offer. "He came to Paris," says Félibien, "without having made up his mind to settle there; but Cardinal Richelieu, appreciating his genius, and anxious on that account to retain him about the person of the king, sent for him, upbraided him with his wish to visit Spain, and telling him it was more glorious to serve France than foreigners, presented him to Louis XIII., who appointed him one of his painters-in-ordinary, and gave him a salary, with apartments in the Louvre."

Secure of an independence, and comfortably settled in the French metropolis, Stella invited his nephew Anthony Bousonnet, and his three nieces, Antoinette, Frances, and Claudine to live with him. He himself instructed them all in the principles of drawing, and, afterwards, perfected them in the art of engraving. The etchings on copper of Claudine, the youngest of the three, are among the most celebrated productions of the French School in this department. It was at this time that the painting of "The Village Dance," from which our engraving is copied, and innumerable other pieces of great merit which Stella had brought with him from Rome, were first made public in France. In this piece, the landscape, which is evidently Italian, is more artistically conceived and executed than the figures, which are deficient in grace and beauty. The landscape, however, in the distance, which is bathed in the soft and clear light of an Ausonian sky, redeems the imperfections of the figures in the foreground, of which the attitudes and disposition are good, but the "finish" loose and exceptionable.

#### "ST. PETER DENIES CHRIST."

Claudine, who although the youngest of the three nieces, had, with the precocity of genius, already outstripped her two sisters, was soon invaluable to her uncle, whose fame she both shared and increased. His ideas, interpreted by this clever girl on copper, achieved for Stella an immortality of fame, and made some of his works rank in public estimation with the *chefs-d'œuvre* of Poussin himself. This was especially the case with the series of paintings illustrating "The Passion of Christ," many of which Claudine engraved; but her early death prevented her from completing the series. "The Denial of St. Peter," which we now reproduce, is among the number of those to which the young engraver's genius has added so much force and expression. The handling and the action of this striking production are quite Poussin-like; there is no trace here of that effeminacy and voluptuousness which have elsewhere characterised Stella's style. The figures in the foreground—amongst whom St. Peter, in that moment of cowardly weakness which he afterwards expiated by a death similar to that which the Saviour is here about to suffer, stands most prominently forward—are in attitude and disposition admirably conceived. The demon that has prompted the lie—"I know not the man"—seems to have transformed the saint, who had been distinguished by his divine Master as the rock upon which he would build his church, into a hoary old sinner, who disgusts us by the hypocritical expression of his face. Above him, in the niche, stands the accusing cock, whose warning voice reminds the apostate saint of the prophetic words, "Before the cock crows, thou shalt deny me thrice." And there, with her well-

defined Jewish profile, stands the damsel, who "came unto him saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee;" and there are those who "stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them, for thy speech bewrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man; and immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice; and he went out and wept bitterly." The spirit which had urged "the fisherman" to follow afar off his beloved master into the palace of the high priest, with that multitude who had come out against him with swords and staves to take him, deserted him at the moment of trial. The lesson conveyed by this piece is most impressive. We must never forget, even when most self-reliant, the divine command, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

The series of "The Passion of Christ" were the best things that Stella ever produced. Without being very original in conception or execution, they are drawn from so pure a source that they edify while they please. The most common-place occurrences are, as it were, redeemed by a kind of uncouth elegance; and even the brutality of the soldiers who are insulting Christ has in it an energy of expression which is an admirable imitation of Poussin's best style.

Gaiety, grace, and sweetness were, nevertheless, the distinctive features of Stella's masterpieces. His *pastorales* have a beauty peculiarly their own. There is a simplicity about them,—but it is a simplicity which exists only in the choice of the subject, and in the mind of the artist. For, in sooth, simplicity, in the full acceptance of the word, cannot be found in those who, instead of taking nature for their mistress, have been carefully educated in the routine of the academies of art. So James Stella, when he condescended to paint village scenes, could never entirely divest himself of his Roman predilections. The "grand style" in which he had undergone his apprenticeship peeped out on all occasions. Under the garments of his Sabine peasant girls we perceive the studied anatomy of the antique statue. His historical reminiscences give a character and tone to the attitude and action of all his figures. His reaper wields his sickle with all the pride of a Roman hero, and the gleaner walks with the majestic gait of one of the Cariatides in motion.

In his devotional pieces, grace was also the distinguishing feature of his style, and it gave, as it were, a seasoning to the cold insipidity of his conception.

The Carmelites, the Cordeliers, and the Nuns of the Order of Saint Elizabeth de Bellecœur, vied with each other in their patronage of Stella, and for a time employed his pencil exclusively in their service. In his vocation of "Painter-in-Ordinary to the King," he was the first who took the likeness of Louis XIV. (then dauphin).

Those splendid books which were printed at the Louvre (for instance, that prayer book composed by Tristan l'Hermite, and dedicated to the Queen) were illustrated by Stella with admirable frontispieces. He supplied drawings to Rousselet, Mellan, Daret, &c. &c. In recompense for his genius and his labours he was made a Knight of the Order of St. Michael.

He was seldom without a paint-brush or a pencil in his hand. To judge by his works, one would imagine he must have enjoyed a very long life, but he died at the age of sixty-one. His death occurring, not as has been often erroneously stated, in 1647, but on the 29th April, 1657. He was buried at St. Germain L'Auxerrois, before the Chapel of St. Michael.

#### "COMING HOME FROM WORK."

There is something very joyous, pastoral, and Arcadian in the conception and execution of this agreeable picture. But we fear it is rather the "ideal" than the "real" that Stella has given us here. At any rate, if two hundred years ago, and among "the vine-covered hills and the valleys of France" labour was so much like play as to leave its sons and daughters at the close of the day so full of jocund activity, there is a great change even among our sprightly neighbours, while in England it is and ever has been painful to see how faded, weary, and overwrought the labourer returns from a hard day's work. And even in France, those who now at the close of a long day meet a troop of home-bound peasants, will not see them dancing along like a party of Bacchanals. Bodily fatigue is a great foe to rustic revelry, and we fear that such "a coming home from work" as that before us existed only in the imagination of the poet and the painter.

There is a great deal of beauty in this lively, pleasing picture. The quiet sky is well contrasted with the animation of the figures, in which there is something at once grotesque and picturesque. If

there is something rather too ideal in the mirth and joyous activity of these ruddy children of labour, they themselves are true to nature—they are sketched to the life and from the life. These nut-brown wenches, footing it so merrily home, are no "lovely young Lavinias" with the forms of sylpha, and in their faces the mental culture of Muses; they are bold, strong-built, buxom women, not a jot too



COMING HOME FROM WORK. FROM A PAINTING BY JAMES STILL.

delicate and refined for the boors who accompany them, and are their partners in the labours of the day and the sports of the evening, and will be so in the journey of life. Such scenes as these might have suggested Gray's well-known description of "The Country Girl and her Happy Lot"—

"What happiness the rural maid attends  
In cheerful labour while each day she spends;  
She gratefully receives what Heaven has sent,  
And, rich in poverty, enjoys content."

Such happiness and such unblemish'd fame  
 Ne'er glad the bosom of the courtly dame.  
 She never feels the spleen's imagined pains,  
 Nor melancholy stagnates in her veins;  
 She never loses life in thoughtless ease,  
 Nor on the velvet couch invites disease.  
 Her homespun dress in simple neatness lies,

BELSHAMITE. FROM A PAINTING BY DAVID.



And for no glaring equipage she sighs.  
 Her reputation, which is all her boast,  
 In a malicious visit ne'er was lost.  
 No midnight masquerade her beauty wears,  
 And health, not paint, the fading bloom repairs.  
 If love's soft passion in her bosom reign,  
 An equal passion warms her happy swain.

No homebred jars her quiet state control,  
 Nor watchful jealousy torments her soul.  
 With secret joy she sees her little race  
 Hang on her breast, and her small cottage grace;  
 The fleecy ball their busy fingers cull,  
 Or from the spindle draw the length'ning wool.  
 Thus flow her hours with constant peace of mind  
 Till age the latest thread of life unwind."

Of course we must make due allowance for the poetical element in this description. Experience tells us no state of life is free from care and pain; but a life of rustic labour is exempt from many of the countless woes that follow in the train of vanity and ambition. Still, love even in the peasant's breast may be crossed; jealousy is twin-born with affection in the cot as in the castle. The peasant wife and mother is doomed, like the high-born lady, often to

" Watch the stars out by the bed of pain,"

and she, too, is as much given as her loftier sisters

" To make idols, and to find them clay:"

and when it is so, the unkind peasant husband—perhaps a drunkard, and therefore a wife-beater—is very coarse clay indeed. In this state of probation there is no perfect felicity—but

" God made the country, and  
 Man made the town;"

and, therefore, the country offers more of peace and pleasure, less peril, less temptation, less sin, and, therefore, more comfort on earth, more hope of heaven.

The landscape in "The Return from Labour," or "Coming Home from Work," is very varied, rural, and refreshing. A cottage gable, with a chimney, whence issues a smoke that tells of a good fire within, is suggestive of a warm hearth and a hot supper; a flock of sheep wend drowsily along, giving, as they always do, a tranquil, soothing beauty to a scene. The trees are masterly; the hills, flanked with verdure, smile rather than frown in the distance. The dog looks the most sedate and sensible of the home-bound party; and the whole piece is suggestive of good and kindly thoughts and feelings.

### HIS MERITS.

M. de Piles, speaking of Stella, says: "He was certainly a painter of great genius, to whom and from whom nothing came amiss, but rather prone to the sunny than the dark side of life—delighting in the sportive, shunning the terrible and the gloomy,—a man of noble mind, moderate in expression. The attitudes of his figures were always easy and natural; rather cold, but always agreeable. His colouring was sometimes rather crude, like that of Francis Périer; sometimes pale of tint, like Lesueur's. His local tints were very undecided, and his warmer tones (seldom copied from nature) were too florid, and had too decided a vermilion in them."

On the whole, Stella was a painter of great merit, but not quite first-rate. Immortalised by the engravings of Millan, Goyrand, and Francis Poilly, backed up by the renown of his brother, his nephew, and his three sisters, the name of James Stella can never die.

Amateurs delight in collecting together, in one portfolio, the works of all the Stellas; and in the "History of Painters" it would be unwise to separate the members of this great and gifted family. They were sons and daughters of genius, and the laurels and *immortelles* that each individually planted during his life, overshadow and adorn that grave where rests a family whose name is dear to the lovers of art—the family of Stella.

## J. LOUIS DAVID.

---



ABOUT a century ago the *morale* of the painters of the French School was at the lowest ebb. Following in the wake of Watteau, who had prostituted at the shrine of sensuality his gifts, natural and acquired, the members of the Royal Academy of France were engaged in a kind of licentious rivalry. Undeterred by the remonstrances of Lemoine, who, in his morbid anxiety to escape from the condemnation of the metreticulous style of his *confrères*, terminated with his own hand his melancholy existence, they made the resources of art pander to the triumphs of profligacy. Devoid alike of sense and shame, they openly paraded what decency condemns; and the scenes which even the great Flemish masters, who cannot be taxed with any excess of refinement, studiously veiled in demi-tints or in darkness, they made the foreground of their pieces. They mistook licentiousness for love; and instead of representing the "Lord of all" in that suggestive guise which makes his presence rather a matter of conjecture than of certainty, they immodestly betrayed the secrets of the bridal bower, and unblushingly revealed the mysteries of Hymen.

When the proud beauties of the court were inaccessible, they made their very *pastorales* the medium of immorality, and the frolics of Colin and Daphne in the hayfield furnished them with *matériel* to gratify the morbid pruriency of their imagination. Even the truth of nature was sacrificed to sensuality, and the landscape which they defiled had not the redeeming beauty, the softness, and the colouring of Watteau's too fascinating masterpieces.

A radical reform in style, tone, and spirit could alone rescue the art of painting from utter depravation. This reform the master genius of David at length effected. Vien, with feeble and irresolute hand, but with a correct taste and judgment, had in vain attempted to give a more healthy tone to the style of the French artists. But to recover the lost clue and make a fresh start for the legitimate goal required a man of more decided genius and energy, and a more correct appreciation of the beautiful and the sublime, of which a classical age had furnished such exquisite models in the statues and frescoes which adorned its ancient temples, than Vien ever possessed.

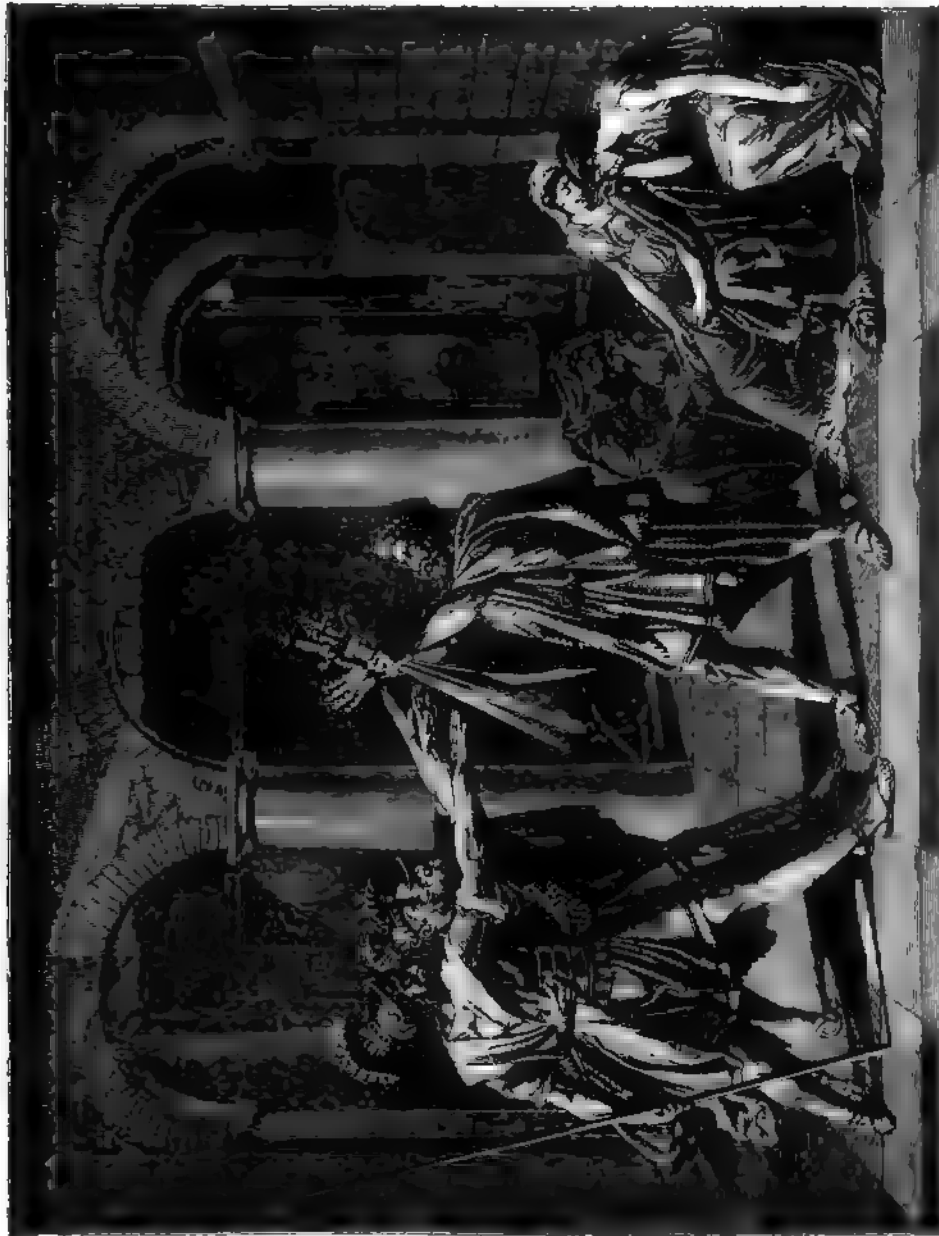
Inconsiderable in time, but incalculable in style, is the interval which separated the effeminate Boucher, so remarkable for the grace and beauty of the tapering limbs of his figures, from that of David, who was in painting what Luther and Calvin were in religion. Strange dispensation of Providence!—this stern and uncompromising reformer of composition, contour, and colouring was a near relative of Boucher! The latest in the list of those who had corrupted the course of art in France—the master, indeed, in whose *chefs-d'œuvre* concludes the long saturnalia of sensualism—was the collateral ancestor of the great regenerator of the French School. Boucher was the grand-uncle of Louis David, who was born at Paris in 1748.

Although enrolled at an early age among the students of the National College, our painter made but little progress in classical literature. Entirely possessed with the spirit of painting, his copy-books were always filled with likenesses instead of Latin; and he ever preferred improvising a Scipio or a Hannibal in the full panoply of war to retailing the imaginative speeches that Livy has put into their mouths.

His father, who was a haberdasher, was killed in a duel when David was only nine years of age, and a maternal uncle became, in consequence, his guardian, who, discovering in David much quickness of perception and judgment, wished to make an artist of his nephew. But genius, like fate, is irresistible, and the incipient painter had already too great a consciousness of his own power to submit to the dictation of an uncle who had only half appreciated his natural gifts. One day his mother sent him with a letter to his grand-uncle Boucher, who was at the moment of David's arrival putting the finishing stroke to one of those voluptuous figures, which, although objectionable in many respects, had nevertheless a merit of their own. The mere sight of the palette and easel was enough to excite

the imagination of the young aspirant, who gazed in a kind of rapture upon the picture while Boucher was reading his letter.

The enthusiasm of David excited a lively interest in Boucher, who kindly undertook the artistic education of his grand-nephew. Finding, however, in his pupil a loftier genius and a purer taste than



THE OATH OF THE HORATII. FROM A PAINTING BY DAVID.

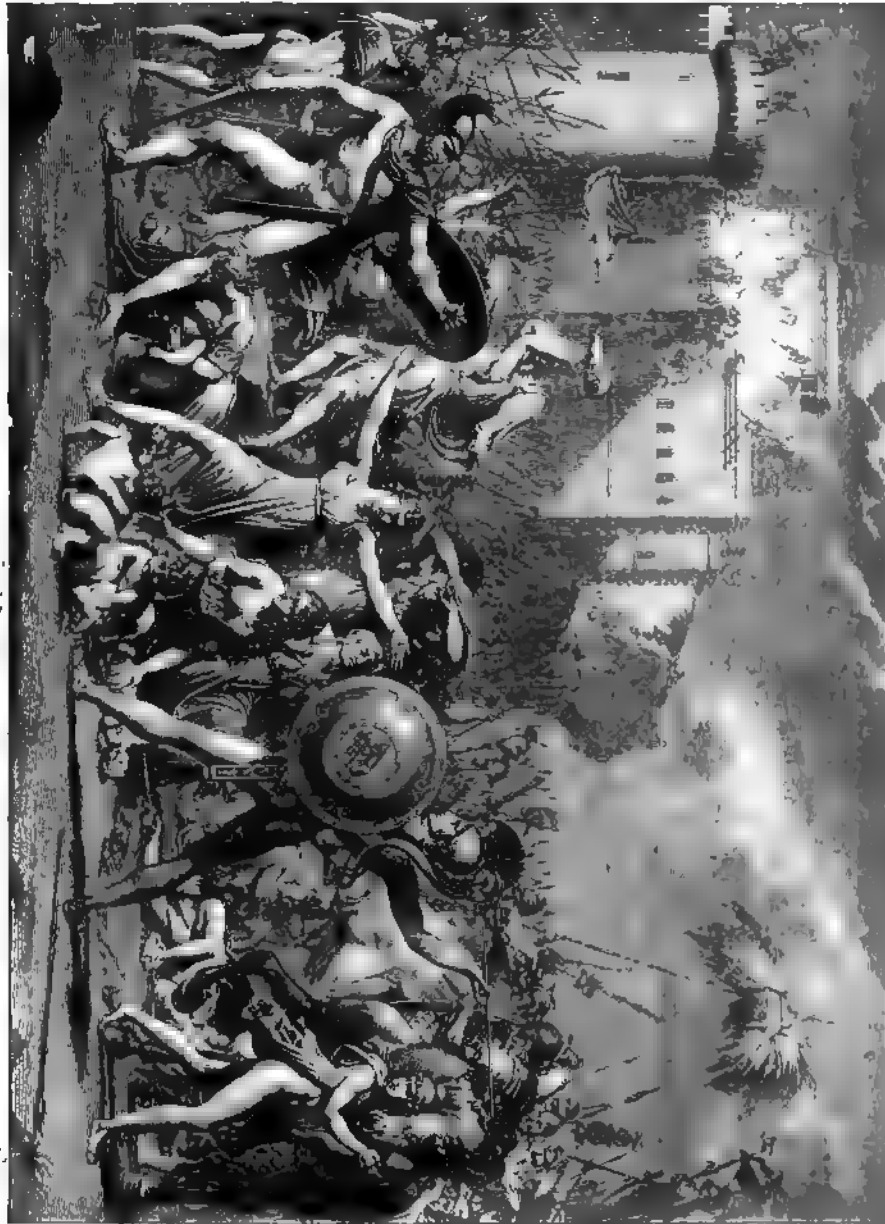
he himself possessed, and feeling that such instructions as he could give would be rather prejudicial than otherwise, he generously handed him over to Vien, with a confession of his own inability to improve him.

In 1772 we find David contending for the Roman prize of painting. But his genius was not yet



matured, and he had, moreover, for his judges the very tribunal he was one day destined to overthrow. He sustained in consequence two successive defeats.

Bitter and discouraging were the trials and struggles of those two unsuccessful years. His studies were often interrupted by the inadequacy of his means, and the privations of penury added poignancy



THE SABINE WIVES. FROM A PAINTING BY DAVID.

to the sense of the injustice of his judges. Relief, however, often comes from a quarter whence it is least expected. Inscrutable are the ways of Providence!—the guardian angel of David was an opera-dancer! The celebrated Guimard, at that time the idol of Paris, who held in subjection all the butterflies of the court, and all the hangers-on of the Prince Soubise, whose fortune she was dissipating,

had just taken possession of a palace called the Temple of Terpsichore, which had been built expressly for her in the Chaussée d'Antin, a little paradise, in which, to be a guest at her suppers, was reckoned the *ne plus ultra* of happiness.

Frangonard, that exquisite painter of grace and love, had been intrusted with the decoration of this temple. The dancer, however, and her decorator had just quarrelled, and Frangonard, who had painted the lovely Guimard as a laughing Terpsichore, contrived to enter unperceived, and to transform the figure of the fair one into that of a Fury. When Guimard caught the first glimpse of the offensive caricature, she was beside herself with rage; and, forgetting how much the passion into which she had thrown herself increased her likeness to Tisiphone, she launched out, before her friends, invectives against the painter. The company, however, instead of sympathising with her wrongs, only laughed; and Frangonard, having thus gratified his revenge, declined to complete the decorations of the temple, and David was, in consequence, appointed his successor.

One morning, when David was busy at work, the fair Guimard perceived that her painter was thoughtful and uneasy in his mind. She kindly questioned him as to the cause of his grief, and David then confessed that he had not the means of purchasing the models, and patiently awaiting the result of another trial of his skill. The kind-hearted girl at once begged his acceptance of the sum he required. The offer was so touchingly and gracefully made that David could not refuse; and, procuring at once the necessary means, he again entered the lists with his successful competitors. But the sun did not as yet shine on his side of the hedge; and his despair at a defeat which he now sustained for the third time was so great, that, forgetting the advice given by the wise fabulist,

"Beware of desperate steps; the darkest day,  
Live till to-morrow, will have passed away,"

he formed the terrible resolution of starving himself to death. His abode was in the Louvre, where he shared with the witty and inspired Sedaine the apartments which the king had assigned to his favourite rhymster in that magnificent palace.

The poet, whose affection for the painter was almost as great as if he had been his own son, was one day uneasy at the non-appearance of David. Unable to gain admittance, and receiving no reply to his frequent knocks at David's door, Sedaine, in a fright, rushed after Doyen, the only member of the Royal Academy who had voted in favour of our painter. Roused at length from his languor and lethargy by the united summons of his two friends, David staggered to the door and let them in. They soon induced him to abandon his suicidal intentions, and, at their instigation, he competed once more with his rivals; and in the year 1775 succeeded in carrying off the great prize of the Royal Academy of France.

Notaire, who had been the president of the academy of art at Rome, died that same year, and David's master, Vien, was chosen to succeed him. Master and pupil set out, in consequence, together for Rome, and visited on their road most of the celebrated galleries of Italy. But their enthusiasm, which had been on the increase at every city through which they passed, did not reach its climax till they entered the Vatican, where David, in a kind of rapture, gazed for the first time on those exquisite *chefs-d'œuvre* of which the prestige is so much enhanced by time and historical associations.

He immediately set about copying basso-relievos, antique statues, and Italian masterpieces; but he always selected, in every department, the purest models. There was already a decided change in his manner of thinking. France was, however, fresh in his memory, and early impressions still exercised so powerful an influence over him, that he made a beautiful copy of Valentin's "Last Supper," because he joyfully recognised in this master the spirit of the French School, softened and modified by the genius of Caravaggio.

Wavering between past predilections and present inspiration, he painted the picture of "The Plague," which is preserved in the Lazar House at Marseilles. This piece, in which we may yet trace a lingering recollection of the spirit of the eighteenth century, exhibits evident signs of an impending revolution in style. Pompey Battoni pronounces the plague-stricken figure which occupies the foreground of the piece worthy of the pencil of Michael Angelo.

In the artistic world of Rome great changes were gradually taking place. Canova was meditating a thorough reform in sculpture, and Raphael Mengs was endeavouring, by practice, as well as precept,

to resuscitate in the Italian School the purity of Raphael d'Urbino. Just at this time Winckelman produced his learned history of art, in which he gave a decided preference to the artistic principles of the Greeks, and, with all the enthusiasm of an antiquarian, multiplied instances of their superiority of conception and execution. The tide of reaction had therefore set in, and the combined efforts of these reformers were soon to effect a revolution in art as complete as that which was then taking place in politics.

When David returned to France, in 1780, his whole style was so far revolutionised that he no longer chose his subjects from real life, but from the antique, or from models of "the grand style."

#### "BELISARIUS."

Under the influence of this reaction he composed his celebrated "Belisarius," which we have reproduced. The original painting is in the gallery of the Louvre. This piece is the last indication he gave of a wavering predilection for the past. It stands as a landmark between the school in which Louis David had been educated and that of which he was destined to be the founder. This piece is in the original of historical size, but, notwithstanding the artistic adjustment of the drapery and the merit of the grouping, the whole picture loses by a comparison with that of the "Belisarius" of Vandyck, who, unfortunately for our painter, had exercised his genius on the same subject. When Louis David exhibited his composition, some connoisseurs immediately produced an engraving from the great Flemish master's *chef-d'œuvre*, and when tried by this high standard David's soldier, who starts at recognising in the beggar before him the general who had so often lead him on to victory, is deficient in energy of attitude.

Vandyck's soldier personifies surprise so well, not only in every lineament but in every limb, that even if his features were veiled, his arms would still express the amazement of his mind. David's soldier, on the contrary, has a stage-struck appearance, and looks more like a fifth-rate actor "playing his antics before high heaven," than a Roman warrior. The public, nevertheless, approved of the piece, and carried David in triumph before his picture.

He was now on the high road to fame and to fortune. Pupils were eager to profit by his instructions, and the rising generation of painters urged him to open at once that school which became in a few years so popular. Louis XIV. appointed him "Painter-in-Ordinary to the King," and assigned him apartments in the Louvre. He was elected a member of the Royal Academy; and as the favour of the fickle goddess always attracts the wealthy suitors, David soon managed to secure a bride in the person of a lovely young heiress, the daughter of an architect whom the king had appointed surveyor of the royal edifices.

#### "THE OATH OF THE HORATII."

In the year 1784 the king requested his Painter-in-Ordinary to execute the beautiful picture entitled "The Oath of the Horatii." David asked permission to visit Rome, that he might have the advantage of painting the Romans in their own city. His request was complied with, and the picture when finished achieved a wonderful success among the Italian connoisseurs. It was everywhere the subject of conversation. "Cardinals, and other ecclesiastical dignitaries," says David, in a letter to a friend at Paris, "honour my *rara avis* with a visit." Great, however, as was the admiration which "The Oath of the Horatii" excited in the metropolis of the ancient world, its reception in Paris was anything but flattering to the painter. M. d'Angivilliers, steward of the king's household, a conceited, pragmatist ignoramus, who, because he had acquired a smattering of the gargon of connoisseurship, imagined himself a judge of pictures, affected to despise David's production. He declared that he disapproved of all the innovations of the new style. Measuring the canvas of the picture as he would the cloth of a coat, and finding that it was thirteen instead of ten feet broad, he affected much arrogance, and upbraided David with having surpassed the limits assigned to his piece. The painter laconically bade him take a pair of scissors and cut it down to the proper size. To form a correct idea of the effect produced on the French connoisseurs by "The Oath of the Horatii," we must take into account the predilections of the times. People accustomed to the effeminate productions of David's contemporaries, in which the stereotyped Sybarite has scarcely even the merit of mannerism, were

startled at the sudden apparition of those manly figures in a Roman interior which archeological research has reproduced with historical accuracy, and which forms so admirable a stage for one of those ancient dramas of which the modern world has acknowledged the grandeur and impressiveness. Every one marvelled at the audacity of a painter who could thus conjure up one of the most remarkable inci-



THE DEATH OF SOCRATES. FROM A PAINTING BY DAVID.

dents of classical history, and resuscitate, together with the costumes of that distant epoch, the manners, the architecture, and the genius of the early Romans. It was like passing from the namby pamby of the spasmodic school of poetry to the vigorous rhythm of a Milton, or from the palling common-places of Dorat to the majestic metre of a Corneille. To the critics of the present age, who require in a

picture less stiffness and more elaborate execution, the sharp outline, the close imitation of each figure by its neighbour, the forced and painful rigidity of the hands and feet, which extends to each individual finger and toe, appear somewhat exaggerated; but then what a contrast do they not offer to the *material* of the productions of a time in which were seen nothing but indecent subjects treated in a most lascivious manner.

A well-known critic has accused David of historical inaccuracy in the composition of the



PIUS VII. FROM A PAINTING BY DAVID.

background of his piece, but he has defended himself with a skill which shows how well he had mastered every detail of his subject. Plutarch he had by heart; most of the Roman classics he had read; Livy was his favourite author. He is, in consequence, never at fault in anything that relates to antique usages or fashions. So great indeed was his reputation for his knowledge of Roman antiquities, that he inaugurated that imitation of a classical age in dress and decoration at Paris, which dates from

his time. It was indeed only after the exhibition of "The Oath of the Horatii" that classical ornaments became the rage, and that the sons and daughters of fashion furnished their abodes in the style of Tarquin the Proud, quaffed their wine out of Herculanean  *pocula* , and lighted their rooms with the candelabra of the Villa Albana. Men wore buskins for boots, and women  *chlamyds*  for cloaks, and for the first time the massive furniture of our ancestors gave place to statues, medals, and Etruscan urns. On the stage, the  *dramatis personæ*  of the tragedy were accounted as they ought to have been in fabulous or authentic history. It was David who clothed the form of Brutus with that classical toga in which Talma made his appearance on the boards before an astonished audience. It was David, and not Talma, who effected a complete revolution in scenic dress, and showed the absurdity of giving red-heeled shoes to Nero, and a slashed  *pourpoint*  to Leontes or Germanicus.

#### "THE SABINE WIVES."

This picture is in the museum of the Louvre, and furnishes another proof, in its elaborate details, of the antiquarian accuracy of the French master. But if we are to consider it as the work of the chief of the new school, some discount must be subtracted from the enormous reputation it has achieved. There is in the piece neither action,  *chiaro-oscuro* , nor any of that handicraft which puts into play the great machinery of historical painting. The figures of the warriors are not the stalwart frames of the ancestors of those who subdued the Carthaginians and the Gauls. How could so graceful and slender a frame as that of Romulus, who figures in the foreground, have been reared in those clumsy, massive, and primeval abodes which crown the beetling summit of the Tarpeian rock? Who would recognise in this well-trained hero of so delicate a construction, so fine a skin, and accounted with so much care and elegance, the foster-child of the she wolf of Rome, the founder of that barbarous colony of banditti, destined to achieve the conquest of the world? Who would guess that the hand of him who wields so artistically the lance had shed the blood of his brother Remus?

In subjects of this kind Poussin is more natural, more truthful, more historical. David makes of his heroes gladiators, who have been taught to fight and to die in graceful attitudes before an admiring crowd; while Poussin's men-at-arms are clumsy, brutal, and almost undisciplined. Their gestures and actions are in harmony with their appearance, and they move naturally if not nobly. His "Rape of the Sabines" is a rude  *mêlée* , in which each struggles with the other, and drags off the reluctant and lovely captives,

"Who know not they are fair."

David's heroines are decked out with care and taste. They are artificial creatures who seem even to have acquired a coquettish way of dishevelled tresses. There is an air of the actress about them, and their attitude is too studied to be effective.

But although in the foreground there are the defects we have mentioned, the skill of the great master is discoverable in the middle distance. The aged warrior, who sheathes his blood-stained sword—the hoary grandam, who lays bare her withered breast that had suckled Romans—and the mother who holds on high between the contending hosts the child, which is the pledge that must reconcile them, are the efforts of genius.

If the "Sabine Wives" cannot be dignified with the title of masterpiece because it has neither probable action, conventional style, nor  *chiaro-oscuro* , the figures, when taken separately, are faultless models. The Romulus is the reverse view of an Apollo Belvidere, with helmet, spear, and buckler. The figures are all personifications of youth, loveliness, purity, and simplicity. The painter has preserved the serpentine line of beauty in their forms, and they have an air of calmness and dignity which is redolent of Olympus. The children, and especially the child who, crawling on the ground, smiles as he raises his head and gazes on the ghastly but glittering panoply of war, are beautifully designed and finished. The eyes beam with the light of life, and the cheeks have the carnation hues of infantine health. The horses are less deserving of praise; they are not of that classical type which it was so essential to preserve in a piece of this kind, and their historical deficiencies are not redeemed by the truthfulness of their appearance or colouring.

The horses of Phidias were not yet known. David had been dead many years when the Elgin marbles first enriched the art treasures of our own country and became popular in France through the medium of innumerable engravings.

## "THE DEATH OF SOCRATES."

David, with all his gifts, natural and acquired, was nevertheless an unbeliever. He figures most unenviably as a regicide in the darkest page of the history of France. One of that frantic generation who "got drunk with blood to vomit crime," he joined in the vain crusade waged against gospel truth by those who had impiously constituted themselves "the age of reason." He unblushingly avows himself an infidel, and declares that he esteems Raphael above all other painters, not because he had treated divine models with an inspired pencil, but because he had managed to invest with the halo of his own genius subjects in which he (David) took no interest. Imagining himself a philosopher, when in the sacred definition of the term he was a "fool," for he had said in his heart there is no God, he made of Socrates a kind of idol, and of patriotism a religious institution. The heroes of his fancy were Junius Brutus, Horatius, and Leonidas, and if he has exhibited none of the softening influences of Christianity, none of the gallantry of chivalry, he has in some measure compensated for the deficiency by the Grecian contour of his statues and the attic beauty of his models. How charming is the purity of the forms which figure on his canvas with all the grace and dignity of the statues in the Temple of Minerva. Since the days of Michael Angelo and Raphael d'Urbino the world has produced no painter but David who could have described so classically and yet so touchingly "The Death of Socrates." The Athenian philosopher is arguing with his disciples on the immortality of the soul, when the messenger of the eleven hands him, with averted face, the fatal bowl. The philosopher accepts with his right hand the poison without turning his eyes from those whom he is addressing. Entirely engrossed by the discussion in which he is engaged, he will not pause for any sublunary consideration. His left hand raised to heaven indicates plainly the subject of his argument, and the quiet way in which he receives the hemlock shows the unruffled resignation of the man. The hour is sunset—a sunset to which even the glowing language of our own poet can add no glory.

"On such an eve his palest beam he cast  
When, Athens! here thy wisest looked his last;  
How watched thy better sons his farewell ray,  
That closed their murdered sage's latest day.  
Not yet—not yet—Sol pauses on the hill—  
The precious hour of parting lingers still;  
But sad his light to agonising eyes,  
And dark the mountain's once delightful dyes;  
Gloom o'er the lovely land he seemed to pour,  
The land where Phœbus never frowned before;  
But e'er he sunk below Cithæron's head  
The cup of woe was quaffed—the spirit fled—  
The soul of him who scorned to fear and fly,  
Who lived and died as none can live or die!"

At first David had painted Socrates holding the cup which the messenger in tears offers him, but Andrew Chénier, with a truer appreciation of the character of Socrates, said, "No; he will only drink of the bowl when he has finished his discourse." Around the great heathen philosopher are collected his school of disciples. Their admiration of the man is only equalled by their grief for his loss. The younger portion of them are the most demonstrative in their sorrow, while those who have already acquired, under the discipline of Socrates, the habit of repressing their emotions, are hanging with mute attention upon his last words.

Plato, wrapped in his cloak and with his head bowed on his breast, sits at the foot of the bed. He cannot trust himself to look round. He knows that his face would reveal the struggle within. In the background are the stairs of the prison, along which the family of Socrates, who have taken a final farewell, are compelled to retire.

It is a great pity that the working up of this wonderful masterpiece is not in harmony with the spirit of the conception. Poussin had inculcated that principle of consistency between the tone of the colouring and the character of the subject which he himself so successfully put into practice. He would have given a Dorian severity of tint to "The Death of Socrates;" and, to render his piece more touching, would have made it less attractive. David, on the other hand, in studying the embellishment of his *chef-d'œuvre*, has so far diminished the effect by too great a refinement in the details of the colouring that, in order to appreciate the full merit of this composition, and acknowledge that



NAPOLEON THE GREAT CROSSING THE ALPS. FROM A PAINTING BY DAVID.

there is nothing equal or second to it in the *répertoire* of any school of painting, the critic must judge of it by the engraving, and not the original picture.



## "POPE PIUS VII."

The portrait of Pius VII., which we now reproduce, was painted at Paris in 1804, and forms part of the art treasures of the museum of the Louvre. This piece has been much over estimated. The figure of the old man is artistically drawn, and nature is faithfully represented in a style at once bold and correct. The hands, which are perhaps the most faultless portion of the whole conception, are after



RETURNING FROM MARKET. FROM A PAINTING BY LANTANA.

the manner of Philip of Champagne, but more truthfully drawn. The piece, however, taken as a whole, is but an imitation of the Flemish School, and has scarcely any of the characteristics of David's style.

"If o'er his fair, broad brow are wrought  
The intersected lines of thought,  
Those furrows which the burning share  
Of sorrow ploughs untimely there,"

the effect is brought about rather in spite of the painter than through his agency, for David has only reproduced, with the inexpressive accuracy of the photograph, the well-defined traits—the harsh features, in which there is a mixture of vulgarity and refinement—the Italian idiosyncrasy of the face, and expressive elevation of its dark eye-brows.

The portrait is a pleasing subject for contemplation, but the well-known beauty of the original, his highly intellectual expression, his rank and world-wide celebrity were sufficient of themselves to produce a pleasing picture. David was, even with a Pope for his sitter, what he could never avoid being, a skilful draughtsman, and a master of unrivalled experience in the art of modelling. But the study of the outward form of the subject seems to have absorbed all the painter's faculties, for there is a total absence of idealism in the composition. The Pius VII. of our own Lawrence is, on the contrary, redolent of poetry and grandeur. The head, which is full of life, is radiant with intelligence, and there is lightning in the glance. The genius of the chief of the Roman Catholic church beams from his eyes, and redeems the plebeian heaviness of the chin and the sensual thickness of the lips. Instead of representing him as David had done, quietly seated beside a wall, and without any of the insignia of sovereignty, except the imperial purple of Rome, Lawrence introduces to us this prince of the church surrounded with splendour and armed with all the marvels of the Vatican. If there is anxiety in his attitude—if there is a troubled light in his eye—if his whole person is indicative of the unsettled state of his mind, the reason of all this is obvious. The painter was anxious to remind the spectator of the stormy career of that celebrated pontiff.

“NAPOLEON CROSSING THE ALPS.”

Of this inspired *chef-d'œuvre* there are no less than four different copies by the artist himself. The one from which our engraving is taken is in the museum of the Louvre. This is the most graphic of all David's masterpieces. The painter has given to his *chef-d'œuvre* all the powers of his mind—all the resources of his art—all the fruits of his labour. At the time of the celebrated passage of Mount St. Bernard by the first consul of the French republic, ambition had not yet urged the hero of Marengo to

“Wade through slaughter to a throne,  
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind.”

He was then the *beau-ideal* of David's revolutionary fancy—a patriot warrior, triumphant over the tyranny of the oppressor, and sacrificing at the shrine of liberty all the promptings of his own ambition. At the time when, in imitation of Hannibal and Charlemagne, Bonaparte crossed the Alps, he was verifying the truth of our poet's inspired verse:—

“For freedom's battle once begun,  
Bequeathed by bleeding sire to son,  
Though baffled oft is ever won,  
While kings, in dusty darkness hid,  
Have left a nameless pyramid—  
Thy heroes, though the general doom  
Hath swept the columns from their tomb,  
A mightier monument command—  
The mountains of their native land.”

So sung the poet about the heroes of Greece, and so thought republican David about the beardless consul he has painted on that fiery charger, who, with a consciousness of his high mission, seems to swerve beneath the weight of the great conqueror whom fickle fortune is now hurrying on to victory over the trackless summits of the Alps. The patriot painter would have had no sympathy with the purple tyrant.

“When the soldier citizen  
Swayed not o'er his fellow men,  
Save in deeds that led them on  
Where glory smiled on freedom's son,  
Who, of all the despots banded,  
With that youthful chief competed?  
Who could boast o'er France defeated,  
Till lone tyranny commanded—

Till goaded by ambition's sting,  
 The hero sunk into the king?  
 Then he fell! So perish all  
 Who would men by man enthrall!  
 And thou, too, of the snow-white plume,  
 Whose realm refused thee e'en a tomb,  
 Better hadst thou still been leading  
 France o'er hosts of hirelings bleeding,  
 Than sold thyself to death and shame  
 For a meanly royal name."

Such is the view which even Frenchmen, greedy as they are of glory, and notwithstanding their hero-worship of their great idol, take of the step which converted a patriot hero into a purple tyrant.

David exulted in the part which he himself took in producing that terrible social convulsion which Edmund Burke calls "the greatest moral earthquake that ever convulsed or shattered this globe of ours." His pencil, his pen, his time, his genius, his labour were all enlisted in the cause of the great revolution. His "Oath of the Tennis Court" is a piece in which he introduces Barnave, Mirabeau, and Robespierre. This production was so much approved of by the "Convention" that they ordered it to be completed at the expense of the nation, and hung up in the hall of the Assembly.

David was afterwards elected a member of the "Convention Nationale," and as he caused the abolition of the post of "President of the Academy of Art at Rome," his influences among his *confrères* must have been very great.

He voted for the death of the unhappy Louis XVI., and he has immortalised the assassination of Lepelletier-Saint-Fargeau by a *chef-d'œuvre* entitled "The Last Moments of Lepelletier." The murdered man is stretched at length in the foreground of the piece, and the sword that pierces through his side divides a paper inscribed with the significant words, "I vote for the death of the tyrant."

His piece of "Marat Expiring" is a triumph of artistic skill, and plainly shows how great an admiration even so gifted a man as David could feel, with a mind distorted by political prejudices, for the greatest miscreant the world ever produced. His "Festival in Honour of the Supreme Being" cost him a five months' imprisonment after the defeat of the *extrême gauche* party to which he belonged. But art enjoys a kind of political indemnity, and as his friends were many and powerful, and the purity of his private life well attested, he was set at liberty.

"The Distribution of the Eagles," and the "Coronation," were subjects which he painted at the request of the first Napoleon for large sums. Pius the VII. is not as he was originally represented by David, for it was at the instigation of the Emperor that the painter made him raise his hand as though he were pronouncing a blessing; "For," said Napoleon, in his laconic manner, "I have not brought him from such a distance for nothing."

The very day that the allied armies entered Paris the painter finished his "Leonidas." There was something more-than chance in this coincidence. David, no doubt, meant that his picture of "Thermopylæ" should bear the date of the invasion of the French metropolis.

In 1816 the restoration of the Bourbons compelled the old republican painter to quit his country. He took up his abode at Brussels, where he lived for ten years beloved and esteemed by everybody who knew him. He refused a very lucrative and flattering offer from the King of Prussia, preferring the independence of his home and the painter-worship of the pupils he was instructing, to the favour of kings. He died on the 29th of December, 1825, in the seventy-eighth year of his age.

The government of the restoration were naturally implacable towards a man who had voted the death of the martyred king, and who had therefore been with malice *prepense* guilty of the crime of parricide. They would not repeal his sentence of exile, and refused to allow his ashes to be buried in France.

### HIS MERITS.

David was almost as great in design and style as Rubens was in imagination and colouring. But he had no original mode of execution—at one time imitating Valentin or Van der Werf, and at another Domenichino, of whose pearly gray, without warmth or spirit, he was very fond. At the close of his career he adopted a good deal of the manner of the Flemish School, and devoted himself to

colouring. He was of an imitative nature; and his residence for so many years in the land of Rubens accounts for his predilection so late in life for what he had so long neglected or despised. But the chief attraction of David is the high morality of his style. No painter of any school has been as successful as he was in making the art of painting the medium for inculcating noble and generous sentiments.



THE BANKS OF THE SEINE. FROM A PAINTING BY LAVERA.

His artistic career—or, at any rate, the most successful portion of it—was passed amid the feverish excitement, the high aspirations, the paralysing terrors, the bloody *dénouement*, and the galling disappointments of the first revolution. But the inhuman excesses of the times in which he flourished do not seem to have influenced him, except in one or two instances, to which we have already drawn attention.



SIMON MATHURIN LARTAGA.

in his character of painter. He is as impassive on the canvas as he was in the "Convention." David owes his immortality more perhaps to the reputation of the school of which he was the founder than to the merit of his own masterpieces. The overpowering influence which he exercised over the most remarkable epoch in French history is his greatest glory. His prestige was not simply national, it was European. He effected a revolution in every style of painting. He convinced the artists of the Flemish School that drawing is as necessary an ingredient of success in painting as colouring; and he persuaded the Italians that there is more artistic merit in classical than in Catholic masterpieces.



In France he made painting the medium of moral instruction; and he effected an entire change in fashion, furniture, decoration, and dress.

David will, therefore, live in the memory of his grateful countrymen as well on account of the merits of his masterpieces as of the popularity of the style of which he was the founder. If, however, the influence he exerted over the spirit of his age should grow "small by degrees and beautifully less," the genius he has displayed in "The Death of Socrates" would still immortalise his name.

## LANTARA.



**IMON MATHURIN LANTARA** was one of that reckless fraternity of roysterers who, with much genius but no judgment, spent freely what they earned easily, but who were too often destined to languish in the hospital in their passage from the tavern to the tomb. Posterity, however, which looks to effects without analysing causes, is faithful in its allegiance to those artistic spendthrifts.

Lantara, whose name has been handed down to us as the type of these tavern-frequenting painters, and who is a kind of bye-word in France for "waste and want," was one of the most favoured of the sons of genius. Indigent,

indolent, and, worse than all, indulging in the excessive use of strong drink, he always preserved unimpaired his adoration of nature and his love of art.

His early history is very little known, for when, about the middle of the reign of Louis XV., he achieved his first success in Paris, no one could tell whence he came or who he was, and he seems himself to have had some doubts upon the subject.

According to the most authentic report, he first saw the light at Montargis or Fontainebleau, in the year 1745. But it is, in reality, of little importance whether he was born at Montargis or Montauban, at Fontainebleau or Fécamps. His father was, we believe, a sign-painter, quite incapable of giving his son any instructions in art. Always of an inquiring mind, but especially interested in watching the phenomena of the rising and setting sun, Lantara whiled away the long and dreamy days of youth in loitering along the lonely lanes of the forest of Fontainebleau, in dozing in its grassy glades, and in gazing with a kind of rapturous delight upon the golden glories of the evening sky. Those inspiring rambles which Claude Lorrain so delighted in among the classic monuments and crumbling tombs which characterise the approaches of the Eternal City, Lantara imitated on a smaller scale and under a less genial sky.

There is, indeed, all the difference between the merits of the productions of the two painters that there is between the beauty of the Campagna of Rome and the suburbs of Paris. Lantara was a dreamer. We can find no other term which sufficiently defines that restlessness of mind that was always actuating him. Ever in quest of poetry, his life was spent in the fond chase. Some seek for poetic inspiration in love, some in labour. He pursued the *ignis fatuus* even in the tavern. He took up his abode at a gloomy hotel in the Rue du Chantre, which he generally quitted betimes for a morning ramble through the fields. He was scarcely ever at work, but always on the watch; and never returned to the confinement of the city until compelled by hunger. Half intoxicated already by the sweet perfume of the foliage he had been inhaling, the cheap wine, in which he freely indulged at the first low pot-house he reached, soon overpowered him. At other times, he would shut him self up in his gloomy garret for weeks together, without once stirring out.

Such was Lantara's career. When and how he managed to work, no one can exactly tell. But one thing is clear (for the paucity of his productions prove the fact), that he painted as little as possible. Every man must live, although the cynical Voltaire, when reminded of that axiom by a beggar, declared that he did not see the necessity.

Lantara, compelled by want, sold some of his landscapes to greedy picture-fanciers, to amateurs, and neighbours, who, eager to make a good bargain, bought at a mere song what they sold for a round sum.

### "RETURNING FROM MARKET."

An artist so constituted by nature was certain to succeed in landscape; for men who care neither for fame, fortune, nor reputation, are always ardent lovers of nature, if they have a genius for painting. The country is to them everything; a substitute for all the household ties in which the domestic man rejoices. They live upon the effects of light and shade; and it is at once their pride and the secret of their success. The rays of the setting sun are for them a mine of gold; and the pale moonbeams a rich vein of silver.

How earnestly and patiently must he not have studied the effects of the rising moon, to have produced the striking and poetical illustration of that beautiful phenomenon from which our engraving is copied.

"It is the hour when from the boughs  
The nightingale's high note is heard;  
It is the hour when lovers' vows  
Seem sweet in every whispered word;  
And gentle winds and waters near  
Make music to the lonely ear.  
Each flower the dews have lightly wet,  
And in the sky the stars are met;  
And on the wave is deeper blue,  
And on the leaf a browner hue;  
And in the heaven that clear obscure,  
So softly dark, and darkly pure,  
Which follows the decline of day,  
As twilight melts beneath the moon away."

The flood of silvery light gives almost a frosted appearance to the foliage of the trees. The whole scene is highly poetical, and proves how great must have been the painter's appreciation of the pale charms of Cynthia. Lantara was more enamoured of the beauty of the stars, of the shadowy mysteries of the "gloaming," and the deep silence of the night, than of any *inamorata* of flesh and blood. Often might he be seen in the evening, motionless as a statue, on the "Pont-neuf," watching, in a kind of holy trance, the declining sun, as it cast on the broad river the lengthening shadows of the arches, or broke in a thousand scintillations on the glittering ripples of the river. Sometimes his feelings would so completely overcome him that he would burst into tears.

#### "THE BANKS OF THE SEINE."

In the retirement of his garret he would draw from memory the effects he had so much admired. The lovely view we here reproduce is a landscape painted from recollection. There is the bridge upon which he has so often taken his stand,

"From morn to dewy eve."

We had almost said, "from dewy eve till morn;" for he was quite as much enamoured of the pale beauties of the moon as of the golden glories of the sun; and in the short and balmy summer nights he loved to trace her silvery path through the firmament, and preferred the starry canopy of heaven to the poverty-stricken and smoke-begrimed roof of his confined and oppressive lodging. It would require no great stretch of the imagination to transpose the scene, and for "Seine" to read "Thames." There are many spots

"Where wanders the hoary Thames along  
His silver-wending way,"

for which this river, studded, as we see it, with little isles and oases, might well stand.

Sometimes he would paint the effects impressed upon his mind on blue paper, picked out with white chalk. His calm and peace-inspiring moonlight scenes, and his celebrated "risings of the god of day," when he comes forth like a bridegroom from his chambers in the East, are nearly all drawn on blue paper, relieved with white chalk. They are designed from memory, and not from nature; for the variegated hues, the contrasts, and the changes of "the greater and the lesser light," Lantara, from frequent observation, had got by heart.

The name of Lantara does not once occur in any work upon painting or painters; but, to compensate for this unaccountable silence of biographers (the result of ignorance or prejudice), he has been immortalised (even if his *chefs-d'œuvre* had not survived the test of time and criticism) by a piece, first acted at the Vaudeville Theatre in October, 1809, entitled "Lantara; or, the Painter at the Pot-House." As this dramatic sketch is by three wits who had, in all probability, some personal knowledge of the eccentricities of our hero, a slight analysis of the piece will give a more accurate idea of the painter than any other record we have of him. Like the wise men of Greece, Lantara carries about his person all his property. He enters the tavern, accompanied by his familiar, who, like another Mephistopheles, is always at his elbow. One of the two has probably enough of this world's goods to pay the score. At that time the tavern was the frequent haunt of people of quality; and under



THE BETROTHAL OF THE VIRGIN. FROM A PAINTING BY ALBERT DURER.





THE LORD AND HIS LADY. FROM A PAINTING BY ALBERT DÜRER.

Louis XIV., and even at the beginning of the reign of Louis XV., fashionable people often got fuddled. The celebrated Chapelle, the popular wit of his day, and an excellent boon companion, was

sometimes drunk for two days together. "Only look at the taps in the suburbs," says the Marquis of Mirabeau, the father of the French Hampden; "on any holiday you may see the whole population of Paris fraternising in those sinks of iniquity. Even the respectable shopkeepers are in the habit of drinking there *en famille*, and of taking their young children with them." A little further on the Marquis speaks of titled acquaintances of his who were never sober. But in the case of Lantara, the scene of the vaudeville is laid in "The Swiss Cottage" of the Botanical Gardens in Paris,—a kind of tavern. The painter has made an appointment there with a picture-fancier of the name of Jacob, for Lantara always made his bargains and settled his most important business over a good dinner, imagining with ourselves that the genial influences of the table facilitate matters of business. This practice of making a good meal the medium for mercantile transactions, we have borrowed from our German ancestors. The simple landscape painter has got into his head that antediluvian notion, that love is necessary in marriage, and, acting upon this conviction, wishes to make a match between his daughter Theresa and Victor, the son of Jacob. But the wealthy Israelite, who measures everything by money, is so indignant at the bare mention of so great a *mésalliance*, that he will not even condescend to breakfast with the poor painter, but goes off in high dudgeon to "The Rainbow," a café as renowned in Lantara's time as the *Trois Frères Provençaux* is at the present day, leaving the painter disgusted at the purse-proud insolence of the old Jew. He does not, however, allow his anger to interfere with his digestion, and begins his breakfast with drinking to the health of all mankind.

At this crisis, a celebrated model of the name of Belletête pays the painter a visit, and Lantara invites him to breakfast. This scene contains one of those happy touches of nature which shows the difference between a sensual old Jew and a painter who, even in a tavern, gives evidence of the genius which inspires him. As he has not a halfpenny to bless himself with, he very naturally orders the dearest wine and best viands, for he knew the wisdom of our old adage "in for a penny in for a pound." But mine host, rather uneasy about the score, very soon stops the supplies, refuses a capon which was to form the second course, and asks for money. Lantara calls for paper, and with the happy inspiration of genius makes a sketch of *Belletête* in the character of Silenus, with his glass in his hand, and trolling a catch. The moment it was finished, Lantara sent off the sketch to the Jew, who was breakfasting at "The Rainbow," fixing the price at a louis. Jacob would give no more than twelve francs, and returned the drawing. The artist tore it up in a rage, and after fortifying himself with a few more glasses of wine, dashed off in a trice a new composition, in which he represented the two lovers Theresa and Victor in a most impassioned scene. This new *chef-d'œuvre* he sent off at once to Jacob, of whom he demanded two louis. The old huckster was just leaving the Rainbow with some of his friends, who, admiring the sketch, bid against one another until the price reached fifty dollars, but Lantara, honourably abiding by his first offer, let Jacob have it for two louis. Overcome by this act of generosity, Jacob agrees to the proposed marriage, and Lantara settles upon his daughter a portion of 20,000 francs in "Moonlight Scenes" which are still *in nubibus*.

The authors of this amusing little vaudeville have drawn our hero to the life. Simplicity of heart, disinterested liberality, frankness, and a manly self-reliance—these were characteristics of Lantara, as they are indeed of almost every unsophisticated genius. As to his love of wine, the Vaudeville, or dramatic sketch, of which we have given the plot, does not agree in this respect with a short memoir of Alexandre Lenoir, who says decidedly, "Lantara has been most falsely accused of drunkenness. He preferred a cup of chocolate or of coffee to a bottle of wine. Picture fanciers took advantage of his unsuspecting confidence to get his pictures for a mere trifle. He would often paint a landscape for a sponge cake, a tart, or some other piece of pastry. Dalbot, the proprietor of a third-class house of entertainment, got a beautiful series of drawings by Lantara in return for the coffee and chocolate he gave him for his breakfast."

And what were these pieces that he lavished in exchange for pies and patties? They were neither tipplers, tavern scenes, nor out-door revels. No! they were representations of nature under her most fascinating aspects. Golden horizons—the purple hues of evening—these were the scenes that Lantara preferred. Dalbot's obscure customer had chosen poetry for the subject of his piece. His model was neither the gross Diogenes nor the old Nestor—popular models with the painters of the day. His model was the sun—the glorious orb of day, under all his phases from dawn to dewy eve.

Lantara was, indeed, the Claude of our more northern climate. He could not find on the banks of the Seine or the Oise those majestic ruins, those temples dedicated to the god of Love, those sepul-

chral monuments, of which the marble pillars, dyed yellow by the burning sun of Italy, bear in their time-worn crevices the bright and incense-breathing flowers of that Ausonian paradise. But, as Lantara had never revelled in the scenes which inspired Claude, and which invest his landscape with a kind of sacred poetry, he could only represent those effects of light of which he was himself cognisant. A very competent judge remarks: "It would be impossible to push any farther than Lantara has done the science of aerial perspective. His paintings and drawings are in the best taste; and, there is no doubt, they would have been still more successful if, in the foreground, the importance of the objects was more in keeping with the rest of the composition. But, with the exception of this defect, which does not at all interfere with the painter's merit as a colourist, his works may be studied with much advantage; and they *must* have the effect of rendering more easy the imitation of the beauties of nature."

It was to no purpose that M. de Caylus, and other virtuosos, who had taste to appreciate the merit of Lantara's productions, endeavoured to withdraw him from his vagabond style of life. Better housed, fed, clad, and cared for, Lantara tried in vain to accustom himself to the requirements of a more refined and artificial life. But his habits were in iron grooves; and they soon asserted their ancient mastery over him.

In his new abode he missed that talisman which had given a kind of zest and enjoyment to all the trials of his life. He missed that freedom of action—that unfettered, unquestioned control of his own time and means—those long rambles in the woods, which had given such a relish to his existence. Like the "nearer" brother of the "Prisoner of Chillon,"

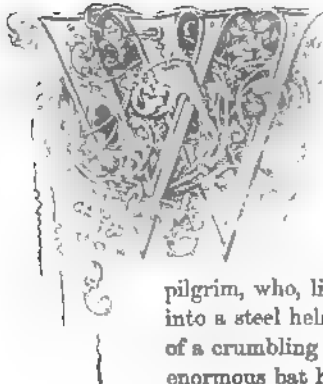
" His soul was of a mould  
Which in a palace had grown cold,  
Had his free breathing been denied  
The range of the pure mountain side."

Disgusted with the artificial restraints of a society for which he was not fitted, either by nature or education, he returned with a feeling of emancipation to his back attic and early breakfast-house. But the poverty of which he was so much enamoured soon proved fatal to him. Oppressed by a paralysing languor, he was compelled to take refuge in a hospital. He was admitted a patient at the "Charity," about noon on the 22nd of December, 1778; and at six o'clock in the evening he was no more.

#### HIS MERITS.

A discerning author does justice to Lantara. "No one," says he, "has better described the different hours of the day. He excelled all his contemporaries in aerial perspective. The air of his landscapes approaches, in warmth and tone, that of Claude Lorrain. His mornings breathe a delightful freshness."

## ALBERT DURER.



**W**HAT strange phantasies the name of Albert Durer conjures up in the mind of the connoisseur! To mention him is to evoke all the superstitions of Germany. Mysterious and supernatural figures seem to loom through the mist. Here an unknown knight pursues his toilsome way amid barren rocks and leafless trees, followed by a demon, putting out his hideous claws, and having for his fellow-traveller death on a pale horse. The knight passes on boldly, without seeming to notice the presence of the monsters that make up his train, nor of the lizards who crawl at his feet. Further on is a pilgrim, who, like Perseus, has winged heels, and on his head a butterfly transformed into a steel helmet. He pulls up his horse at a ruined porch, and knocks at the door of a crumbling castle, haunted apparently by the ghosts of its departed masters. An enormous bat hovers above the scene, and spreading its odious wings, plies them over a female figure reposing in a mournful attitude by the sea-shore. She is known by the name of



THE VIRGIN AND CHILD. FROM A PAINTING BY ALBERT DÜRER.

"Melancholy;" very different, however, to the personification of the same subject described by our own poet—

"And Melancholy, silent maid,  
With leaden eye that loves the ground."

Canonised saints and the crucifiers of the Lord frequent these obscure regions in company with mythological heroes and beings it is impossible to describe. The piece is the graphic illustration of some German legend. Side by side, however, with these inexplicable symbols, which cannot fail to inspire a certain amount of terror, are forms and faces familiar to us all—peasants dancing on the



THE GREAT HORSE. FROM AN ENGRAVING BY ALBERT DÜRER.

green sward, or carrying baskets of fruit—young girls in the first blush of maidenly beauty, such as we often see in the porch of the cathedral, or by the winter fire-side.

Every-day occurrences and household matters are unexpectedly associated with the demons of the

black forest and all the night-mares of German superstition, amongst which hooded and horned devils are by no means the most formidable. Albert Durer, whose masterpieces are a kind of synopsis of the whole fabric of German superstition, was born at Nuremberg, on the 20th of May, 1471. His father, who was a native of Pannonia, was a highly successful silversmith, and an engraver of first-rate talent. When young, he had worked at his trade in the Netherlands, where the famous masters of the Flemish school had taught him their truthful and delicate manner of engraving; but in 1455 he quitted the rich pastures of West Flanders for the verdant valleys of Germany.

At twenty years of age he set up in business for himself at Nuremberg, and espoused a young girl of the name of Barbara Hellerin, who, in due time, became the mother of our artist.

It seems that Albert Durer when very young, began to render efficient assistance to his father in his various avocations, but that engraving was the department in which he took the greatest interest. Some writers have asserted that he received instructions in etching from Martin Shöngauer, a famous artist, who, on account of his great personal beauty, was surnamed Shön, which is the German for handsome. But there is very slender authority for this report; and in Albert Durer's autobiography, which has been preserved by Sandrart, there is not a hint that his father ever contemplated sending Albert to Colmar for the benefit of Martin Shöngauer's instructions. The painter merely says, "Having already perfected myself in the art of chasing, I determined to devote all my energies to painting. I consulted my father on this subject, who was much grieved to find that all the years I had passed in learning the business of a silversmith would thus be so much time thrown away. He, nevertheless, granted my request, and in the year 1486, on the festival of St. Andrew, he bound me for three years apprentice to Michael Wohlgenuth."

Simple in his habits, and upright in all his ways, it was long before he gained an adequate appreciation of his own merits. The oldest engraving we have of him bears date 1497. It represents four naked women, and, so far from its having been taken from a copper-plate of Israel de Mecken, it is an original composition, from which Israel de Mecken's plate is an imitation. The oldest painting we have of Durer bears date 1498. It is a portrait of himself, and is preserved at Florence, in the gallery dedicated to those painters who have bequeathed to posterity likenesses of themselves. It is a half-length likeness. The hands are resting on the window-sill; the painter is clad in his holiday best. His lawn shirt is plaited with care, and over it he wears a white jacket, striped with black, and a kind of Spanish mantle, which does not even cover his shoulders. His long and glossy hair is curled in beautiful ringlets; and although the features are strongly marked, and the drawing is somewhat hard, there is, in the execution, a breadth of tone and a suavity of manner that we seek for in vain in the author's subsequent productions. The painter has given himself that noble and intellectual expression of face which he really possessed, and which is, therefore, not flattered.

#### "THE BETROTHAL OF THE VIRGIN."

Albert Durer was not only very good looking, but he was also very proud of his good looks, as his letters to his intimate friend, Willibold Pirckheimer, written in all the freedom of mutual confidence, sufficiently prove. But the pride that he felt in his beauty was only one of the many ways in which he manifested his deep love for his Creator. Nature, lavish of her gifts to this her favourite son, had made the inner man as perfect as the outer. Camararius informs us that his figure was faultless in its proportions, and that his whole person was, in beauty and symmetry, well fitted to be the receptacle of so rich a jewel as his mind. His eyes shone with the light of genius; his hair was rich, glossy, and abundant; his neck was graceful and swan-like; his chest broad; his limbs muscular; and his hands and fingers of almost ladylike delicacy and shape.

Albert Durer was but fifteen when he first received instructions from Michael Wohlgenuth, an old artist, remarkable for a high sense of honour and a retiring modesty, which was in him the accompaniment of merit of no ordinary kind. His *atelier* was as humble as his spirit was unostentatious. He did not covet glory, but derived from his Bible his greatest comfort and consolation. Nature was his constant study; and, in taking for his models her noblest works, he considered that he was fulfilling the moral obligation of his art.

Under such a master, it was but natural that Albert Durer should with the principles of painting acquire also that predilection for religious subjects which characterised his subsequent productions. The

"Betrothal of the Virgin" is one of the most celebrated of his sacred pieces, and he has bequeathed to posterity a wood engraving executed by himself of this magnificent painting. Though a pre-Raphaelite production, and remarkable for many of those anachronisms in costume and construction which it was the mission of the great regenerator in art, Michael Angelo and Raphael D'Urbino, to correct, it has great merit even in the eyes of those who bask in the light of the *renaissance*. The bridegroom is made a little too bald for the husband of the young virgin, and might very well pass for her grandfather, and the virgin herself has a sour and forbidding expression, which, if it is not owing to the antiquated appearance of her mate, is very unbecoming in a joyous young bride. The officiating priest is the most in harmony with the time and spirit of the piece.

#### "THE LORD AND HIS LADY."

After the expiration of his term of apprenticeship, Albert Durer quitted the *atelier* of Wohlgenuth, and set out on his travels. He was anxious to see the world, and to complete the education he had begun in the *atelier* by a closer observation of different countries and characters. We know very little of the particulars of this early tour, made when the painter was only nineteen years of age. It seems, however, to have exercised a powerful influence over his mind. "I set off," says Durer, "just after Easter, in the year 1490, and I returned at Whitsuntide in 1494. Hans Frey made up a match between his daughter Agnes and myself, settling with my father the conditions of the marriage. Her portion consisted of 200 florins, and the wedding took place a few days before the anniversary of the festival of St. Margaret in 1494."

If the portrait that Albert Durer has bequeathed to us of the bride is a faithful reflex of her features, this Agnes must have been a girl of extraordinary beauty. Indisputable, however, as are her claims to admiration, there is in her face an expression which would awaken some misgivings—a look, harsh and repelling, which became most disagreeably apparent whenever the slightest contradiction disturbed the harmony of her beautiful features. Albert Durer, who was himself of a yielding and amiable temper, had felt many secret doubts as to the expediency of so ill-assorted a match. The captivating specimen of female loveliness that fate had allotted him, seemed to his prophetic fears like one of those ill-omened oracles of Apollo of which the Pythoness concealed the sinister meaning in some brilliant enigma.

The morning of their wedded life was unclouded, but towards noon the horizon became overcast. Durer, who, as we just now remarked, was of an exceedingly accommodating nature, could not summon sufficient courage to enter the lists with the fascinating but formidable Agnes Frey. Our painter, the victim of domestic tyranny, sought for consolation in the society of a friend who was ready to sympathise with him, and even to weep at the recital of his domestic sorrows. Willibold, for such was the name of the friend, was himself a benedict, and was, therefore, from his own experience well able to give salutary advice. But his own married life offered a complete contrast to that of Albert Durer, for his gentle helpmate was a paragon of grace and goodness. Never had the slightest misunderstanding disturbed the even current of their conjugal felicity. The ways of Providence are however inscrutable! Willibold's wife, too good for this world, was snatched away just at the time when her husband most needed the comfort and consolation of her presence, and her death was almost as great a grief to Durer as to the bereaved widower.

"The Lord and his Lady," which we have reproduced in our engraving, was, in all probability, suggested by the domestic affliction of his friend. The knight, proud of the paragon of loveliness, who, smiling and happy, has

"No thought of ill to come;  
No cares beyond to-day,"

sees not that living skeleton, whose name is Death, crouching behind the tree, with hour-glass in hand, measuring every moment as it flies.

"Ah! show them where in ambush stand,  
To seize their prey, the murderers' band.  
Ah! teach them they are men."

Strange and mysterious world! in which the most flimsy phantoms of the imagination are blended with the simplest realities. This world is completely under the control of our inspired painter. Those



MELANCHOLY. FROM A PAINTING BY ALBERT DÜRER.





ARMORIAL SHIELD OF THE DEATH'S HEAD. FROM A PAINTING BY ALBERT DÜRER.

phantoms, which at first sight appear so visionary, assume, upon a closer inspection, a definite form, like this shadowy skeleton; and we soon discover, if we take but the trouble of analysing his work, that this visionary is an artistic manufacturer, a most industrious engraver, and a highly accomplished painter.

#### "THE VIRGIN AND CHILD."

Agnes Frey, avaricious, imperious, and unmanageable, left our painter no peace. She made him work like a slave, imprisoned him in his *atelier*, intimidated him if he wished to go out. A letter to his friend Pirckheimer, which is still extant, shows how much he had to endure. In it occurs this significant passage:—"I believe you have taken unto yourself a wife; beware lest you have taken a master." On one occasion, however, he succeeded in escaping from this domestic bondage to visit the city of palaces and gondolas—Venice. This was in the year 1506. This picture of "The Virgin and Child," or as it is sometimes called *la vierge au singe*, on account of the monkey that crouches at the feet of the virgin, was probably executed during this visit to the Queen of Hadriatic. The fame of Albert Durer had already crossed the Alps, and had even reached the ears of the celebrated reformer of the world of art—Raphael. So great was their mutual admiration of each others masterpieces, that as a pledge of regard they exchanged portraits; and Albert Durer inclosed with the likeness of himself some of his immortal engravings.

#### "THE GREAT HORSE."

The famous engraver, Mark Anthony, of Bologna, happened to be at Venice during Albert Durer's visit. He remarked in our artist's engravings all that perfection of finish that was wanting in his own. He admired the precision and the fineness of the strokes, and the cleanness with which the copper was cut. Durer's wood-engravings struck him as still more wonderful. He attempted to copy his style, and almost unconsciously was led in this attempt to pirate the idea of thirty-three engravings of "The Passion of our Saviour," affixing his own signature to the counterfeit instead of Albert Durer's distinctive monogram.

Vasari states that, when Durer became aware of the existence of these counterfeits, he hastened to Venice, and brought an action against Mark Anthony, who was prohibited by the court from borrowing any more of the ideas of Albert Durer. Bartsch, however, proves that the whole story of the action at law is a fiction, "for," says that discriminating virtuoso, "the engravings of 'The Passion of our Saviour' bear date 1509 and 1512, and therefore they could not have been in existence at the time of Albert Durer's voyage to Italy, which took place in 1506."

At Venice he was a lion of the first water. Freed for the moment from the oppressive tyranny of his wife, he enjoyed the immense popularity his masterpieces had achieved. At last, however, the public enthusiasm became quite overpowering. His palace was besieged with visitors. Noblemen, philosophers, composers, all courted the painter; and the noisy crowd of suitors was so un congenial to the phlegmatic nature of the German, that he was often obliged to hide from their persecutions.

The paintings, as well as the engravings of Albert Durer are singularly original. Although invested with a kind of dreamy spiritualism, they are, nevertheless, remarkable for the careful elaboration and the high finish of the minutest details. It seems to have been the painter's object to define his forms as sharply and clearly as possible, with the intention of compensating by this attention to minutiae, for the vague and dreamy character of his composition.

"The Great Horse," which we here reproduce, as one of the most remarkable of his engravings, is a case in point. The extraordinary finish of the workmanship astonishes the spectator, who cannot sufficiently admire the scrupulously exact outline, the care with which every shade is worked out, the patience displayed in the whole composition. But it were a waste of time to attempt to penetrate the mystery that broods over the piece. No one can ever fathom the design of that horse-looking warrior, who, holding his gigantic steed by the bridal, stops at the gate of a castle in ruins. As he tries to analyse the meaning, a sensation akin to fear creeps over the spectator, and his imagination seeks for an explanation from the painter in the land of empty shadows.

## "MELANCHOLY."

An innate love of fantastic shapes, which from the very commencement of his professional career inspired Durer, never seems to have deserted him. He has given a living, breathing, palpable form to the impressions of his mind in that dreamy figure "Melancholia," who is seated in such a brown study by the sea-side, and who seems to measure with her look-lustre eye the infinite space which lies beyond the blue horizon. Hers is a figure which is indelibly stamped on the mind of the beholder.

Constantly will memory recall the features of that fantastic figure, with her head downward bent, resting on her hands, proud but pensive. Her long hair is wound round her forehead in a kind of diadem, and floats over her broad shoulders. Her folded wings are suggestive of the fervent but fond wish that inspires her to

"Flee away,  
And mix with the eternal ray"

of those bright orbs in the blue heavens "so wildly, spiritually bright." Within the creases of her dress, lies a book; but, like her folded wings, the book is useless, for it is closed. Nothing can be conceived more touching—nothing more depressing than the appearance of this figure. So curiously does her robe hang around her that the folds have a kind of metallic stiffness. Near her stands a dial plate, and above it a bell, which strikes the hours as they pass. The disc of the sun is sinking below the sea, and darkness will soon cover the earth with its mantle. A bat spreads its nondescript wings in the air, and bears in its claws a roll inscribed with the motto "Melancholia." The whole of this composition is symbolical. In her right hand "Melancholia" holds a compass and a circle, emblematic of that infinity of time and space upon which she is meditating. Around her are scattered the various implements of art, and the numerous appliances of science. They have served her purpose, and she now casts them aside, and listlessly ponders on the vanity of all human calculations. With the poet of Hope, she murmurs as she gazes at the setting sun—

"Not all thy trophied arts,  
Nor triumphs that beneath thee sprang,  
Could heal a passion or a pang  
Entailed on human hearts."

Her keys are securely suspended at her belt in token of the haunting suspicions that fill her heart, and of the avarice and mistrust that poison every moment of her existence. Above her is an hour-glass, in which the sands are running low, emblematic of the fleeting years of an existence that is so soon wasted in folly and sin, and which leaves us so little time for repentance.

Nothing was ever more cleverly conceived than the face of "Melancholia." In the cold and unattractive beauty of her features, and in their sinister expression, the painter has bequeathed to us the likeness of his own domestic tyrant, Agnes Frey.

It was in 1514 that Albert Durer first conceived the idea of that type emblematic of science bewildered by doubt, which Goëthe afterwards elaborated in "Faust." But the design of the painter was less appreciated by the public than the drama of the poet, although it is quite certain that Goëthe borrowed the idea of his "Faust" from the fantastic conception of the artist who flourished three hundred years before him.

Albert Durer was the first painter who personified on canvas the sentiment of "melancholy."

## "ARMORIAL SHIELD OF THE DEATH'S HEAD."

This is perhaps the most symbolical and the least intelligible of all Albert Durer's imaginative productions. The field "ermine," charged with a death's head "proper," is no doubt significative of the vanity of all human distinctions. The painter lived in an age when the line of demarcation between the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the patrician and the plebeian, was more clearly defined, and more strictly observed, than in our own more enlightened days. In the beginning of the sixteenth century, the sentiments embodied in the following monumental inscription would have excited little sympathy:—

"Pause, reader, pause, and deign to look  
On one without a name,  
Ne'er entered in the ample book  
Of Fortune and of Fame."



ALBERT DURER.



Wedded to peace, he hated strife,  
 Meek virtues filled his breast;  
 His coat of arms an honest life,  
 A spotless heart his crest,  
 Quartered therewith was innocence;  
 And thus his motto ran—  
 'A conscience void of all offence  
 Before both God and man.'

At the last day of wrath, though pride  
 Now scorn his pedigree,  
 Millions shall wish they'd been allied  
 To this great family."

Of the ignorance and prejudices of the proud, Albert Durer had himself had experience in his intercourse with the great. No artist had ever combined, in so extraordinary a degree, with genius of the highest order those personal qualities, which deprive even envy of its sting, and insure universal goodwill. Overflowing with the milk of human kindness, his conversation was at once so instructive, amusing, and attractive, that his audience never tired of listening to him. His manners, which were the reflex of his mind, were so gentle and refined, that the most powerful princes thought it no degradation to treat him as a friend.



CHRISTIAN DIETRICH.



Ferdinand, king of Bohemia, and Maximilian, emperor of Germany, were his chief patrons. The latter preferred the society of the painter to that of any of the princes or patricians by whom he was surrounded. The story goes, that one day Maximilian had requested Durer to sketch upon the wall some mechanical engine, of which he was testing the power; but, as the ladder upon which he had to stand was too short for the purpose, the Emperor ordered one of the lordlings of his court to hold the ladder while Durer stood upon the top step. The narrow-minded nobleman indignantly refused, upon which the Emperor, in a rage, exclaimed, "You may be noble by birth, but my painter has the true nobility of genius!" And then, to convince his court how much easier it was to make a patrician than a painter, he ennobled Durer on the spot, and gave him for his arms that shield which every academy of art has since borne.

At the age of forty-nine, Albert Durer determined on again visiting those towns of the Low Countries

which had been the theatre of so many of his triumphs. Antwerp was the emporium of the commerce, and the most important city of Flanders, and the painter in consequence made it the first object of his tour. But, unfortunately for him, the terrible shrew to whom he was irrevocably bound, accompanied him even in his travels, and was the perpetual blister of his life. The night of their arrival at Antwerp, the manager of the chief bank invited them to a magnificent supper, and for several consecutive days Durer was escorted through the town by a *cortège* of the most illustrious inhabitants. The painters of Antwerp gave him a dinner in the hall of their academy of art. "They spared," says he, "no expense; the banquet was served on silver dishes, and all the painters were present with their wives. When I entered the hall with Agnes on my arm, they formed a wall on either side of me, while I passed down the passage they made for me, just as if I had been some illustrious scion of royalty. Several personages of very high rank did homage to my talents, and displayed the greatest eagerness to make themselves useful and agreeable to me. When I had taken my place at table, a civic dignitary, of the name of Rathporth, presented me, in the name of the citizens of Antwerp, with four pints of wine, as a pledge of their esteem and regard. I thanked them in a speech in which I endeavoured to express my sense of the honour they had conferred on me. We sat at table till a late hour, and they then escorted me home by torchlight, and overwhelmed me with their protestations of regard."

At Ghent and Bruges Albert Durer was equally well received. He was everywhere welcomed as the great lion of the age. Banquets were given in his honour, the best wine was broached to his health, and the painter himself escorted home each night by the first men of the place.

When the news of these festivities reached Brussels, Margaret of Austria, who was the Regent of the Low Countries for the Emperor Charles V., dispatched an officer of her own household to assure the painter of the favour of both the Regent and the Emperor.

In return for this flattering attention, Durer presented Margaret with some of his most beautiful engravings, consisting of "Saint Jerome in the Chair," etched upon copper with extraordinary skill, a complete set of the engravings of the passion of our Saviour, and two more subjects which had cost him much labour and time, valued by himself at thirty florins. But Durer soon found how little reliance can be placed on the favour of princes.

"Envy will merit as its shade pursue;"

and some sinister influence at the court of the Regent had already made of Margaret a foe instead of a friend. Of this change the artist was speedily made aware. He had just finished a portrait of the Emperor Charles V., and had hastened to take the opinion of the Regent upon its merits, but the insulting contempt with which she treated both him and his painting obliged him to retire with it in silence. Wishing to ascertain the cause of her displeasure, he solicited the gift of the little book of Jacob Cornelisz, a book illuminated with beautiful miniatures; but she answered sharply that she had already promised it to her own painter, Bernard Van Orley.

Thus ended his intercourse with the Regent, much to the satisfaction of his enemies and detractors.

The treatment he received from several of his customers at Brussels was equally unfair toward him, and disgraceful to them. Many of them ordered Durer to take their likenesses, and when they were sent home refused to pay for them. "At Antwerp," says he, in a note to a friend, "I made many drawings, portraits, and other subjects, but for the greater portion of them I never received a penny."

In spite of his industry and economy, he was at last in distress for money; and, embittered by the difference between the magnificent and flattering welcome he had received, and the coldness and insult which had followed, he finished the record which he had kept of his tour with this avenging notice: "In all my transactions during my stay in the Low Countries—in all my money dealings, sales, and other bargains—in all my dealings with the great and the little—I have been robbed, but more especially by Margaret of Austria, who, in exchange for all my presents and all my labour, has given me nothing."

The portrait of the Emperor Charles V., which the Regent affected to treat with so much contempt, the painter was eventually obliged to exchange for a white handkerchief of English manufacture.

Luckily for him a citizen of Antwerp, of the name of Alexander Imhoff, at last obliged him with the loan of 100 florins in gold upon the security of his note of hand, signed and sealed, and payable at Nuremberg.

Just as he was preparing to leave the country in which he had experienced so much ingratitude, Christian II., king of Denmark, arrived at Antwerp, and, hearing that Durer had not yet quitted the place, he sent in search of him, overwhelmed him with civilities, and payed him with Royal liberality for a likeness which the painter took of him. Delighted with the beauty of the engravings of which Albert Durer begged his acceptance, Christian invited the painter to a banquet at which the Emperor, Margaret, and the Queen of Spain were all present. But not one of those illustrious individuals addressed a single word to the noble and handsome guest who had deigned to honour with his company this feast of sovereigns.

Durer, embittered by the fickleness of princes, left Belgium in disgust, and, after all the disappointments of his journey, found his native Germany more delightful than ever. There at least he would only have to endure that perpetual blister of his existence, his scolding wife—an infliction which neither change of time nor place could render more supportable.

The study of the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the Flemish school had somewhat modified the opinions of Durer on the principles and object of painting. Melancthon's letters to the painter, which are still extant, and prove the friendship which existed between the great Protestant reformer and the painter, and the works of Albert Durer himself, are sufficient to show the change which towards the close of his career had taken place in the mind and manner of the great German master. Instead of the exuberance of style which characterised his early productions, he now for the first time seemed to appreciate the merit of harmony and simplicity. He had discovered at last that nature does not openly display that superabundance, that studied variety which he had endeavoured to illustrate in his first productions. That he had made this important discovery so late in his career was a source of unavailing regret, for he felt that he was too old to change altogether his manner and style of painting. He cherished, however, a genuine and laudable ambition to correct all that was wrong in the technical details of his art, and to bequeath to posterity some specimens of the improvement that time and study had wrought in his views and system. These specimens are the magnificent figures of the Apostles which adorn the gallery of Munich.

From the "common lot," however, of prince and painter, Albert Durer could claim no exemption on the score of genius. The toils of his professional career, and the trials of his domestic life, had undermined his constitution. Years had not improved the temper of Agnes, who became every day more insupportable. Herself the prey of an insatiable avarice, she embittered with her selfish fears every moment of her husband's life, and constantly tormented him with her anxiety as to what would become of her if she were destined to survive the husband upon whom she was dependent. She refused admittance to the friends who would have given him consolation and amusement, until at last the old painter, weary of a life in which he despaired of ever enjoying any peace of mind or body, ceased to take any interest in his art. His mind gave way, and he died the victim of domestic tyranny on the 6th of April, 1528.

Such was Albert Durer's passion for the fantastic and the marvellous, that when his waking hours did not furnish him with subjects for his pencil or his graving-tool sufficiently wild and weird for his taste, he had recourse to his dreams, and from them sprung some of his strangest pictures and engravings. Among these is one of the most singular water-colour drawings that even he ever produced. It is in the Ambras collection at Vienna. It represents an immense sheet of water, bordered by a flat table-land, on which are several houses. Over the centre of this huge expanse of water broods an enormous cloud, whence the rain pours down in torrents. To the right and left the scene is shrouded by fogs and vapours. Albert Durer himself wrote beneath this picture:—

"In the year 1525 (the eve of Pentecost), between Thursday night and Friday morning, I had this vision in my sleep:—What quantities of water fell from the sky! and this water beat upon the earth about four miles off with such a dreadful and resounding noise—the whole country was inundated, deluged, submerged; this caused me so great a terror, that I awoke. But I fell asleep again. Then the rest of the water fell—the torrents were but little abated; some came down at a distance, and some close to me; the streams seemed to fall from such a height that they took a long time to reach



ITINERANT MUSICIANS. FROM A PAINTING BY DIETRICH.

the earth. But as the inundation approached me, the rains became so rapid and resounding, that fear overpowered me, and I awoke. I trembled from head to foot, and it was long before I recovered my self-possession; but in the morning when I arose I represented in the picture above all I had seen. May God decree all for the best.

"ALBERT DURER."

Certainly this description is remarkable for its *naïveté* and simplicity; and certainly Joseph Heller—a modern German sage, who has written the best work on Albert Durer that has yet appeared—



THE FATHER INTO DEATH. FROM A PAINTING BY DIETRICH.



has put it out of the power of any other writer to surpass him in ingenuity. He has entered fully into every detail of this most singular picture ; nothing has escaped the closeness of his scrutiny. He has attached the greatest importance to the smallest minutiae , so much so, that having discovered that the sheet of paper on which it is painted has a water-mark, the learned commentator has had this mark engraved, and has inserted it in his work. It is a curious fact that the second volume of this elaborat-

work is the only one that has been published; this volume contains 1,090 pages. It would not perhaps have occurred to any but a German to publish the second volume before the first.

But the mystic and abstruse genius of Albert Durer did not prompt all his conceptions. Sometimes he quitted the realms of "chimeras dire," and wild phantoms of the night, to devote himself and his great powers to historical and religious compositions of the most serious and sublime description.

"The Martyrdom of the Christian Legion," which is to be seen in the Belvedere Gallery, in Austria; "The Adoration of the Magi," preserved in the Cathedral of Florence; "The Trinity," surrounded by saints and blessed spirits; and a great number of other pictures, prove that this sublime master knew how to respect the limits that divide the visible from the invisible world. Some of these works are among Albert Durer's *chefs-d'œuvre*; but the most admirable of all is exhibited at the "Pinacotheca," at Munich. It is divided into two parts, which contain the apostles Saint Peter and Saint John, Saint Mark and Saint Paul. This was the last great work of this fine painter. It was his pride and glory to close his brilliant career by a happy and noble inspiration of the nature of the true sublime—

"So sinks more lovely, ere his race be run,  
Along Morea's hills the setting sun;  
Not as in northern climes, obscurely bright,  
But one unclouded blaze of living light."

Albert Durer painted these Apostles with the intention of leaving them, by will, to the Hôtel de Ville, at Nuremberg, to keep alive at once the recollection of his genius, and the religious enthusiasm of the Lutherans; for Albert Durer had embraced the reformed faith, and her pure doctrines at this time filled his thoughts. Beneath the forms of the Apostles he painted long inscriptions taken from the epistles and gospels, recommending an earnest study of holy writ, and warning their disciples not to believe the doctrines of false prophets.

Albert Durer has given to each Apostle in this picture a distinctive character and a strong individuality. In the aged exile of Patmos we discern the melancholy and enthusiastic expression peculiar to the bilious temperament. St. Peter, with his gray locks and his calm air, conveys an idea of quiet contemplation; but against this conception of St. Peter we protest, as not being borne out by the Evangelists. St. Peter, judged by his words and deeds, was of a sanguine temperament, enthusiastic, zealous, and affectionate; of that nature which, if it by its impetuosity leads to err, leads also to a prompt and fervent penitence. St. Mark is represented with those characteristics which we should have ascribed to St. Peter—zeal, fire, energy, such as become an ardent propagator of the Christian faith. St. Paul, armed with a drawn sword and carrying a Bible, is the symbol of action, power, and despotic will. He casts a glance full of scorn and anger over his shoulder, and seems quite ready to exterminate with the sword the blasphemers of the living God.

However, it were a mistake to imagine that Albert Durer was always grave, that he never indulged in a sally or enjoyed a joke—

"Dulce est desipere in loco;"

and there are letters still extant of his which reveal a merry humour and a love of innocent raillery. Some of the liveliest of these interesting epistles were addressed to Willibold, and dated Venice, where he was far from his wife and enjoying a temporary freedom from domestic cares and certain lectures.

### HIS MERITS.

Among Albert Durer's pictures and engravings are to be found scenes of every description—the familiar, the fanciful, the domestic, the pastoral,—he tried his hand at all, and in all succeeded. In one picture we behold two lovers roaming together in the country alone, but not alone as they who, shut in chambers, deem it loneliness. How they cling to each other—how tenderly the girl looks up—how lovingly the youth looks down.

In another composition we see a village dame. In a third, a peasant is trying, by his rustic flatteries, to win the ear and heart of a young village maid. Durer thoroughly understood the Flemish style, the quiet charm of every-day life, *the poetry of the real*; for the real has its poetry as

well as the ideal, and it is a poetry better understood, and, therefore, better loved by the many. It forms the charm of Burns's poetry and of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and to some of its touches even Shakespeare owes his popularity with the masses; and it was when he depended on this great secret key to the hearts of the many, the poetry of the real, that Charles Dickens won a throne in the mind of the million, which can only be retained by the same style of writing that secured it.

Albert Durer was, in truth, a "marvel and a secret;" not only was he a painter of the highest order and a wonderful engraver, but he fashioned at will metals and minerals, and cut masterpieces (of design and execution) out of gold and marble. In almost every Genoese city the traveller is shown specimens of sculpture, carving, and medallions, said to be by him. Nor was this all; to his great renown as a painter, sculptor, and engraver, we must add that—not less well deserved—of an author of the highest merit. Had his only instrument been the pen, he would still have immortalised his name. His most celebrated work is a treatise on "The Proportions of the Human Body," divided into four books.

We must own, however, that the genius of Germany, always dreamy and obscure, and little remarkable for method and precision, reigns throughout this treatise, where there is a deficiency of general ideas, and where exist neither synthesis nor principles of art.

It is easy to discover in this work that Albert Durer was a man of powerful and lively imagination, but that a dreamy philosophy has led him astray, and that his mind was deficient in that clearness of perception, and that correctness of deduction for which the genius of England and France are remarkable. When one approaches the consideration of so sublime a subject as that marvel of creation, the human form, under the guidance of so great a master as Albert Durer, one has a right to expect that the teacher's views will rise to meet the importance, the grandeur of the subject, and that he will begin with those harmonious but lofty considerations that are called forth in great minds by the contemplation of the *chef-d'œuvre* of that grand artist, Nature.

Albert Durer, on the contrary, lays down at the opening of his book none of those grand rules which ought to form its base. He gives no rules at all, but suddenly dashes in *medias res*, by dividing the human body into seven heads; but at the same time he affirms that it is only in *rustic* figures that these proportions are to be observed. He then devotes a chapter to the division of the human form into eight heads; but although in several parts of his work he gives the preference to this division, he does not advocate it in this chapter. He then goes on to say that nine, and even ten heads may be admissible, but decides the latter division to result in an appearance of attenuation.

The great object of his work seems to be to warn the student against every species of ugliness; but he does not assert that the absence of deformity will insure the presence of beauty. He hopes that "a few gifted ones" will find the true laws of proportion in the study of a great multitude of human figures—"no one human figure being in itself perfect."

This sample will suffice to show that a work so speculative, rambling, obscure, and diffuse, could never become popular, whatever gems of thought and treasures of research may be scattered lavishly through its pages. It is deficient in method; and, whether the teacher be mortal or immortal, method is a *sine qua non*.

In Italy this treatise has found its warmest eulogists and most enthusiastic advocates. John Paul Lomazzo, among others, professes so great an esteem for the German author and his work, that he even goes with him the length of the "ten heads;" and, while owning that many judges consider it extreme, decides that no one can dispute the dictum of so great a master as Albert Durer.

In our own time, M. Paillot de Montabert professes to have discovered in Albert Durer's work "a kind of treasure," and has ingeniously suggested that the author had obtained possession of some ancient manuscript, which had been saved from destruction, and handed down from barbarous and remote ages.

But this learned connoisseur enters into no explanation with regard to the treasures he professes to have discovered; and it seems to us that in order to protect himself from one prejudice, he has fallen into another. If Durer had really possessed the manuscript of a Polyclète, of an Euphranor, or even of some pupil of those sublime masters, there would have been some luminous reflex of their genius in the treatise of the German master. One would at least find in Albert Durer's book the immortal rudiments of that beauty, *to kalon*, of which the Greeks had found out the secret and sculptured the image.

## CHRISTIAN DIETRICH.

WE gaze with delight upon a landscape over which the sun pours a flood of mellow light, and then we exclaim with enthusiasm, who but Claude Lorrain could have given it a depth—a distance which seems to stretch into illimitable space. That darkened chamber, of which the half opened window allows access to a ray of cherishing light, that brings into relief the forms



THE GRINDER AND THE COBBLER. FROM A PAINTING BY DIETRICH.

of three men seated round a table, reminds us so forcibly of Rembrandt that we almost expect to see his peculiar autograph in the corner of the piece. That quiet pasture ground, in which cows, goats, and sheep, tended by a shepherdess, with kirtle and crook, are fording a transparent rivulet, is, we would venture to bet, the work of Berghem. We are surely not mistaken: it can be no other

than Wouvermans who has sketched that horse with graceful but muscular limbs, bestriden by a knight of such prepossessing appearance, and of such noble carriage. We recognise in those precipitous rocks—those deep and narrow ravines—those gloomy caverns, which might serve as a refuge for a whole army of banditti—the peculiar style of Salvator Rosa. Those cataracts, which falling from the abrupt summit of the hills where the gloomy pines cross each other in fantastic forms above the abyss, must surely be the production of the pencil of Everdingen. Varied as are the style, manner, handling, tone, colouring, and character of these several productions, they are all the work of one



THE REPOSE OF THE HOLY FAMILY. FROM A PAINTING BY DIÉTRICH.

master-mind—of one extraordinary man—who had the faculty of fathoming the secret of every branch of painting—of acquiring the manner of the most skilful colourists—of seizing the character of their *chefs-d'œuvre*, and of imitating it most successfully. This versatile genius was Christian William Ernest Diétrich.

He was born at Wiemar, on the 30th of October, 1713; and his father was his first instructor in the rudiments of art. At the age of fifteen he was admitted as a pupil in the *atelier* of Alexander Thiele, a landscape painter of great repute, who was settled at Dresden on the salary and perquisites of

Painter-in-Ordinary to the King of Poland and Elector of Saxony. He remained there only three years, but during that time he had perfected himself in landscapes, the only style of painting which he had the opportunity of practising without appearing too much of an imitator.

When he was but eighteen, a Dresden magnate engaged him as painter to his establishment, and gave him a salary of sixteen hundred francs, or sixty pounds a year—a sum much larger at that time than in the present age of the depreciation of money. Upon this salary he lived for four years at Dresden, free from care and altogether engrossed in the cultivation of his artistic talent.

But in 1734 he was seized with such an enthusiastic admiration of the masterpieces of Rembrandt, John Both, Berghem, Karel Dujardin, and Elzheimer, that he was determined, at all hazards, to visit the land of their nativity.

It is easy to guess from the manner in which he copied the landscapes of his master, while he was still a pupil in the *atelier* of Alexander Thiele, what kind of talent nature had bestowed upon him. "His imitation," says Hagedorn, "was no copy; it was a kind of rivalry of the original." After his visit to Holland he ventured to enter the lists with still greater models. Elzheimer, Van Ostade, Karel Dujardin, and, above all, Rembrandt supplied him with the subject, the style, and the composition of a whole host of pictures.

Of Rembrandt he was particularly jealous. His great object was to fathom and to filch from him those extraordinary effects of light and shade which have made that master the marvel of all subsequent times. He strove hard to acquire the warm and transparent tone of Rembrandt's colouring, the sharp outline of his touch, and the harmonising effect in the whole of the apparently discordant elements of the piece. But Diétrich is not the only painter who has endeavoured to walk in the steps of that inimitable model; and great as is the merit of his copy, he has fallen far short of the imitations of Govaert Flinck, Arnould de Gelder, Leonard Bramer, and Van Eeckout. But if his shadows have not the depth which we so much admire in Rembrandt—if he does not come near him by a long interval in his effects of *chiaro-oscuro*—if his colouring is heavy and deficient in the brilliant and golden tints of the painter of the "Night Watch"—if his floods of light are rough without being rich, it is that the task of imitating Rembrandt is far beyond the scope of human power. But, with this reservation, if we assign no greater value to those pieces in which Diétrich has copied Rembrandt than we should to first-class engravings, it would be unjust not to do honour to the talent of the man who painted the piece intitled "The Fishery" (which has been engraved by Flipart), or "The Return of the Prodigal Son," together with an immense number of engravings whose merits we will presently discuss.

Certain it is that Diétrich would never have either achieved or deserved his great reputation if he had confined his ambition to a mere servile discovery of some of Rembrandt's secrets of light and shade.

The great secret of Diétrich's fame is the universality of his power of imitation. In the presence of Rembrandt he is pensive, dreamy, characteristic in the conception, rapid and fanciful in the execution of his piece. When he falls in with one of Adrian Van Ostade's tavern scenes, or one of his village hops, with all its provincial comicalities, a regular transformation takes place in him. He is no longer the Diétrich of holy writ celebrity, famous for the Rembrandt-like *chiaro-oscuro* of his sacred subjects. His pencil is at once bewitched, and improvises with wonderful faithfulness the grotesque forms for which Van Ostade was so popular—villagers half-fuddled, smoking their short pipes under the hop-covered trellis; babies with brobdignagian heads, and stumpy legs; and coarse country people of both sexes, in woollen caps, or battered old hats.

#### "THE GRINDER AND THE COBLER."

His brush has become suddenly soft and yielding, and his colouring, which was lately warm and golden, is changed into that cold but characteristic green, for which Van Ostade was so renowned, and which gives so harmonious a tone to all his compositions. His "Grinder and Cobbler" is so admirable an imitation of Van Ostade, that we can scarcely fancy that it is only an imitation. There is the hop creeping up the lattice work, and hanging in festoons over the doorway. There are those babies with heads so grotesquely large, that the diminutive size of their lower extremities gives them a dwarf-like appearance; and there is the coarse and hard-featured woman, whose hideous woollen cap, by covering

the locks that nature intended should relieve the harshness of her face, makes her look more coarse and hard-favoured than she really is. The details of this surprising imitation are so carefully elaborated, and harmonise so well with the whole conception, that it would puzzle the most discriminating amateur to say in what the difference lies between a "Diétrich" and a "Van Ostade."

#### "ITINERANT MUSICIANS."

Our readers are already well acquainted with the peculiar merits of Van Ostade's celebrated masterpiece of the same name. The imitator, in reproducing a similar piece, has preserved much of the identity of the original, although he has varied the number, expression, and attitude of his subjects. In Van Ostade's picture the father, by the aid of his violin, which he wields as a kind of sceptre, rules the small fry of children who gather around him. They are passing through a kind of gate or archway, beyond which we see the blue sky and the laughing landscape.

Diétrich has also introduced some variations in the details. For instance, one of the children is blowing a wind instrument, which does not figure in Van Ostade's piece. The faces in the imitation are more refined and more humorous than those of the original, and it is perhaps in this respect alone that Diétrich has not quite entered into the spirit of his great model. It was not without good reason that Van Ostade gave to his "Itinerant Musicians" that expression of languor and suffering which would be the necessary consequence of the life of privation, misery, and fatigue that they led; but although he has not produced a *fac-simile* of the Dutch master's strolling fiddler, he has given us an exact copy of another of Van Ostade's celebrated characters. In the person of the elder musician we recognise a wight with which all are familiar who have analysed attentively the Van Ostade repertoire.

#### "THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT."

Imitator, however, as he was, it would be doing him an injustice to suppose that he had no style of manner of his own. Even in his sketches he could never so entirely disguise his hand but that some little peculiarity would betray the artist. Nature was too powerful in him, and asserted her supremacy in spite of all his endeavours to overcome her.

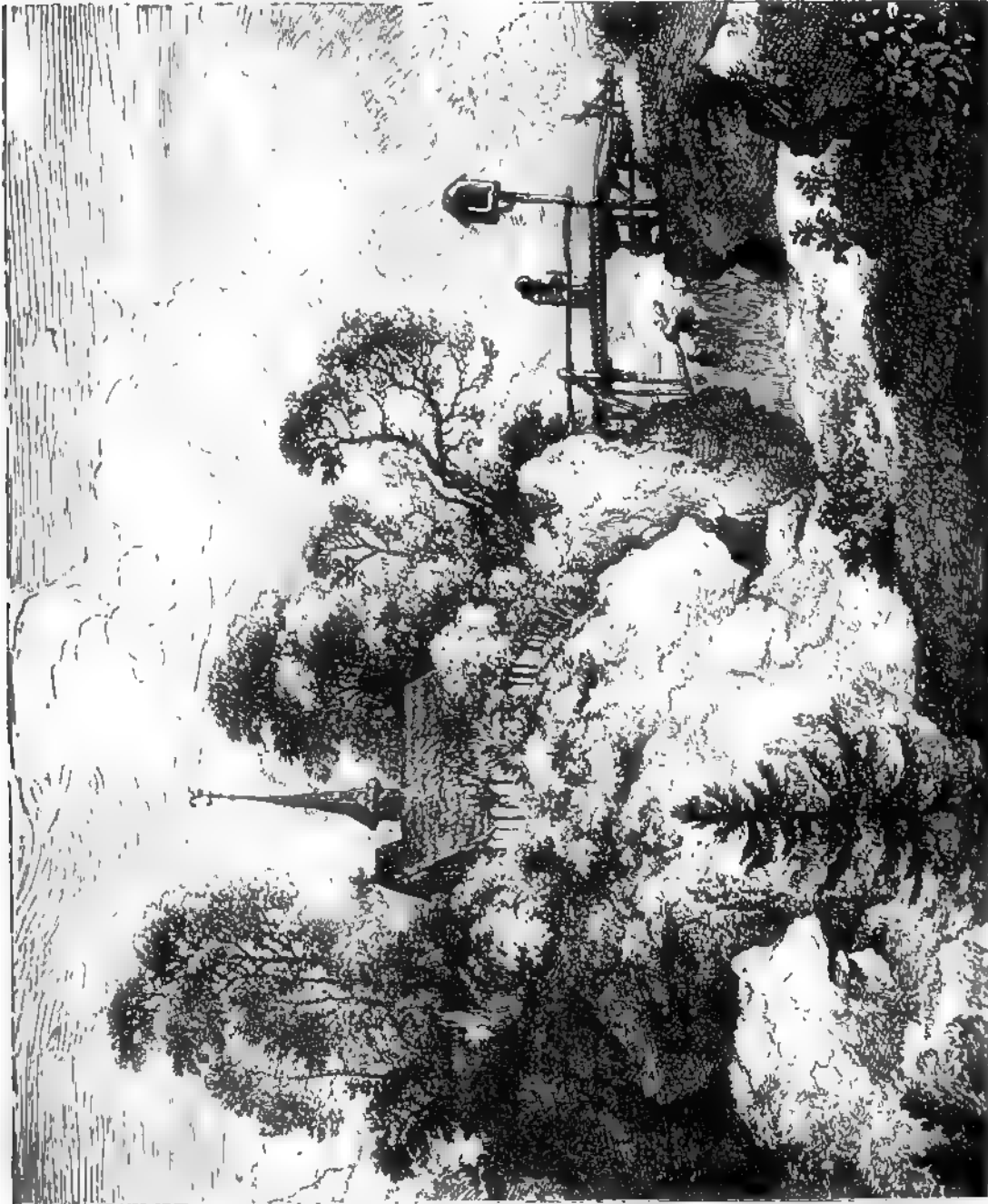
Admirable as are his imitations of the masters of the various schools, he is still essentially German. The pictures which, like this "Flight into Egypt," are reckoned his masterpieces, deserve to be classed rather with the highly finished and carefully elaborated gems of Van der Werff, Elzheimer, and Poelembourg, than with the immortal productions of those original and enterprising colourists, Rembrandt, Rubens, and Salvator. His conception is sometimes deficient in grace; a certain degree of stiffness is perceptible in his drapery; his touch is dry and thin; and his colouring is wanting in brilliancy and effect. "The Flight into Egypt" is indeed a close imitation, not of Rembrandt, but of Elzheimer, and is valuable for the display of powers the very reverse of those he had exhibited in his imitations of Rembrandt. The Holy Virgin is here the same type of beauty which Diétrich was so much in the habit of reproducing in all his sacred subjects, and which seems to have been as much his standard of feminine perfection as the Fornarina of Raphael, and the Isabella Brandt of Rubens.

#### "THE REPOSE OF THE HOLY FAMILY."

This *chef-d'œuvre* was sold in 1817, at a sale of pictures in Paris, for 1,700 francs (£68). Though very different in style, tone, manner, and colouring to the "Flight into Egypt," we still recognise the identity of the "Virgin Mary." The placid slumber of the Holy Infant is well represented, and although we scarcely like the expression of Joseph's face, he seems better suited in appearance and age for the husband of the Madonna, the mother of Christ, than the antiquated patriarch of "The Betrothal" by Albert Durer. The piece is neither very impressive nor suggestive, but in the contrast that it offers to the "Flight into Egypt," we recognise the wonderful versatility of Diétrich's talent.

A Dutchman at Amsterdam, and an Italian at Rome, he had the wonderful faculty of painting landscapes in the style of Claude Lorrain and Salvator Rosa, as well as he had already done in that

of Berghem and Everdingen. "The drawing of this artist," says one of his critics, "is after the manner of the Roman masters, but the lightness of his touch seems to unite the merits of the Flemish and Italian Schools. His landscapes have often the freshness of Lucatelli and the boldness of Salva-



THE WOODEN BRIDGE. FROM A PAINTING BY DIÉTRICH.

tor Rosa. It is indeed strange to find in the same *repertoire*, landscapes in the grand style of Guaspre, smiling scenes that have the indefinable charm of Lucatelli's manner, and wild and picturesque views that seem fresh from the *atelier* of Salvator Rosa, all bearing the autograph of Diétrich.



**"THE WOODEN BRIDGE."**

"The Wooden Bridge," which we now reproduce, is copied from an engraving by Diétrich, in the peculiar style of Salvator Rosa. It is one of six landscapes which are all imitations of that great



THE VILLAGE FAIR. FROM A PICTURE BY VERN.

master. The rough outline, the wild and picturesque scenery, the precipitous rocks, the waterfall, the frail wooden bridge, so simply and rudely formed, that it seems to furnish but an insecure footing for the tottering figure that is slowly and cautiously traversing it, are all admirably characteristic of

Salvator's style. In his engravings after Rembrandt, he has once or twice succeeded so well, that even a connoisseur might be for a moment deceived ; but it is only on very rare occasions that his phlegmatic German nature would allow him to realise the startling and magic effects of the great painter of Leyden.

But if he was wanting in the daring and fiery ambition of Rembrandt, his imitations of Everdingen, Ruysdael, and Salvator are so perfect that they compensate for the deficiency which was the necessary result of his German origin.

He returned from Holland, where for a whole twelvemonth he had been studying the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the Dutch school, in 1735, and for ten years he never quitted Dresden, where he was established as Painter-in-Ordinary to the King of Poland, but once. In 1743 he set out for Italy. His eagerness to visit the land—"mother of arts and arms"—was not the only motive of his journey. Although he worked incessantly, he could not, in spite of his wonderful rapidity of execution, supply the enormous demand for pictures from the Court of Dresden. In vain had he sought an asylum with the Duke of Brunswick—his persecutors soon found him out and renewed their applications. He determined at length, as a last resource, to put several countries between himself and his admirers. He was, however, absent only two years, and he then returned to Dresden, where he resided until his death, in 1774.

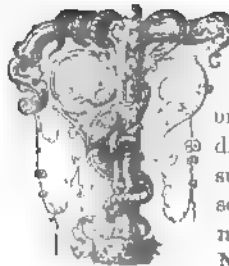
#### HIS MERITS.

"In his youth," says Hagedorn, "he was constantly employed in imitating the works of Bourguignon. He succeeded so well, that when he had completely re-painted two battles by this master, which had been procured from Italy, and entirely destroyed, as far as the painting was concerned, in the journey, many connoisseurs took these reproductions for real 'Bourguignons.' " "We have," says Hagedorn, in continuation, "the testimony of a stranger who thought but little of Diétrich, but who, nevertheless, owns that he studied attentively these 'Bourguignons,' and eulogised their *inimitable* touch."

All this shows that Diétrich spent the greater portion of his life, and employed all his talent in the barren task of imitating the works of other masters. In this predilection for copying, Diétrich obeyed a kind of national instinct. During the first half of the eighteenth century Germany produced in science, literature, art, politics, and manufactures but timid and often unsuccessful counterfeits. The first quarter of the sixteenth century seemed to have monopolised all the originality and all the genius of the German nation.

Now imitation, although perfect, is but a proof of deficiency. The characteristic of genius is its originality—its creative power in execution and conception ; whereas every imitator must be inferior to his model, for had he been but on an equality with the great men he has chosen for his examples, would he have condescended to copy them ? Diétrich's career is an evidence of the truth of this assertion. Not one of his innumerable copies has the merit of the original.

#### FRANCIS DE PAULA FERG.



HIS artist was famous, according to Hagedorn, for the extraordinary skill and taste with which he managed to introduce a number of small figures into a limited space without over-crowding his canvas. "Sometimes," says this celebrated critic, "he would illustrate some architectural ruin with its white marble disfigured by the chinks and crannies of time ; sometimes a pyramid, with its surrounding wall, and an arched doorway with a fantastically carved cornice ; and sometimes a fountain, surrounded by muleteers, who are watering their horses and mules. There, in a corner, we have in the foreground of the piece a young Nemorin whispering his words of love into the delighted ear of his Estelle, who leaves her flock to the guidance of her faithful dog while she listens to the oft-told tale. But as every pleasure has its alloy, so even these moments of stolen bliss are interrupted by the pertinacity of a

wayfarer, who will not understand that he is *de trop*, and insists on asking his way." These notes of Hagedorn give a good notion of the genius and style of Francis de Paula Ferg, a painter of considerable merit, who, although not highly esteemed in our own country, is duly appreciated in Germany.

He was born at Vienna, on the 2nd of May, 1689, and at the proper time went through the usual College course. When he had completed his studies, Pancrattus Ferg, his father, a painter of moderate pretensions, apprenticed him to one of his *confrères*, of the name of Baschneber. The selection was not a judicious one, and it seems almost miraculous that the dawning genius of Ferg was not quenched by the follies of the wretched dauber under whom he was placed. He lost four of the best years of his life under this sign painter of Neustadt. But his father at last saw his mistake and took him home.

How often does it happen that the education of a painter is either neglected or misdirected by his father. Pancrattus Ferg had so completely misunderstood the talent of his son, that he set him to paint grand historical subjects. Now, the predilection of Francis Ferg was for familiar domestic scenes, and for small figures. The study in which he took the greatest delight was that of the engravings of Callot and Sebastian Leclerc, which inspired him with a taste for those *chefs-d'œuvre* in *aqua fortis* for which he was afterwards so famous. Painting was, however, his profession, and he was, in consequence, again apprenticed to an artist of the name of Hans Graf, who had gained a reputation for small figures, and whose influence over his new pupil soon became overpowering. Hans Graf had achieved great successes in fancy pieces. He had the skill requisite for compressing into a small space the motley crowd attendant on a country fair. With him the landscape was only an accessory. Ferg, who had a great taste for landscape, and was unwilling that it should be a secondary part of the style he had adopted, sought out one of the most famous landscape painters of Germany—a certain Joseph Orient—and engaged him as his master; and, with the view of profiting by his instruction as much as possible, he took a house adjoining Orient's *atelier*. This Joseph Orient combined with a lively appreciation of the beauties of nature, a poetical vein, which often inspired him with the enthusiasm of Herman Zaft-Leven. He had, moreover, a predilection for the style of Guaspre, and he longed to imitate the beauties of his classical landscapes. His studies in the Tyrol had given to his handling a wildness and sublimity which redeemed all the conventionalities of the school in which he had acquired the rudiments of his art. Now Orient had a great fancy for introducing diminutive figures into his landscapes—but as he found that he lost much valuable time in making them reach his standard of perfection, he had recourse to the brush of his pupil; so that, by an unexpected interchange of labour between master and apprentice, Ferg painted the figures in Orient's pieces, while Orient instructed Ferg in introducing his small subjects into suitably rural scenery, where the character of the landscape gave effect to the figures.

After profiting for a period of three years by the instructions of Orient, Ferg was seized with a mania for travelling.

At the age of thirty-one he quitted Vienna; and his master, from whom Hagedorn obtained the particulars about him upon which our memoir is founded, lost sight of him for some time. It seems that he passed through Germany, and stopped for a time at the Court of Bamberg, where his paintings were in great request. At Leipsic he met an Alexander Thiele, an artist of Erfurth, who was a celebrated landscape painter, and who had been commissioned to take from nature the most beautiful views in Saxony. Thiele, who was Painter-in-Ordinary to the Court of Dresden, invited Ferg to stay with him in that capital. Ferg gratefully accepted the invitation.

The pleasure he took in the society of his friend was heightened by the certainty that under the guidance of so practised a master, he would make rapid progress in *aqua fortis* engraving—a branch of art to which Thiele and himself were equally devoted.

#### "THE VILLAGE FAIR."

This beautiful and elaborate production is one of the "Art Treasures" of the Imperial Gallery of Vienna. It is painted on copper, and the artistic skill with which so many small figures in various attitudes and positions are introduced into a scene so picturesque and suggestive, heightens the regret we feel that indolence and indigence should have so nearly paralysed the genius of this painter. His engravings are more numerous than his paintings, but both are very rare.

Ferg passed some years at Dresden with Thiele, and often painted figures and animals for the landscapes of his friend. Weary at last of the monotony of this life, he started for England, and established himself as an artist in London, where an imprudent marriage greatly interfered with his professional advancement. Improvident and henpecked, his life was embittered by pecuniary cares and domestic strife. He lived about fifteen years in England, and was one morning found dead on the threshold of his own door. He had apparently sunk exhausted from fatigue, and had been unable to call for assistance. The exact date of his death is uncertain, but he is supposed to have died about the year 1740. There is no authentic likeness of Francis de Paula Ferg.









